3477

Rs 30/-

911.3

BALKRISHNA BOOK Co.
Hazrat[illegible] [illegible]ucknow

# THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PURĀṆAS

# THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE PURANAS

BY

## S. M. ALI, F. N. I.

PROFESSOR OF GEOGRAPHY
UNIVERSITY OF SAUGAR

3477
14 3/67

राज्य संग्रहालय पुस्तकालय लखनऊ

राज्य संग्रहालय पुस्तकालय, लखनऊ
क्रमसंख्या 3477
प्राप्ति तिथि 14 3/67
State Museum, Library, Lko.

PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE
NEW DELHI

JULY 1966

Copyright © S. M. Ali

911.54
A G

State Museum, Library

Printed by D. P. Sinha
at New Age Printing Press
Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 1
for People's Publishing House Private Limited
Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 1

# FOREWORD

IT is commonly believed that the Purāṇas cover a period in the life of the Indian people extending roughly over one thousand years, starting from somewhere about the time of coming into power of the Shunga Dynasty, to the time of the invasion of India by Mahmud Ghaznavi. It was a very chequered period of our history. Great warriors, powerful monarchs, a brilliant output in the field of art and literature, share the canvas with petty chieftains, the unhealthy growth of blind superstitions and the decay and death of the spirit of adventure in science and thought as well as in practical life. In spite of modern researches, we have yet to know many of the essential facts of the life of those days and among these facts there are many which are related to geography. The Indian of those days was not confined to the narrow parochial limits of his own country. His associations and communications extended to at least a superficial knowledge of a large part of the then known world as in the reference to the Nile and its source in one of the Purāṇas. The orthodox Pandit who constantly swears by the Purāṇas knows very little about their contents. His rhetorical knowledge will not enable him to identify most of the rivers and mountains to which these works refer. But without any such identification, the Purāṇic accounts degenerate into flat and often uninteresting narratives.

Prof. S. M. Ali is to be congratulated for his learned work on the geography of the Purāṇas. It is the result of deep study not only of the researches carried out by modern scholars but of relevant ancient literature as well. Without sacrificing scientific austerity he has made the book interesting and instructive. If the world of scholarship accepts his main conclusions he will have established the fact that in the days of the Purāṇas, India was more or less in touch with a greater part of the world to which within a few centuries it turned its back. Obviously, this is not the last word on the subject. The works of Pargiter and Cunningham did something to make Ancient Indian Geography to some extent familiar to those interested in the subject. Prof. Ali's book should go very much farther in that direction and endow names about which we read in ancient literature with meaning. Even apparently fanciful descriptions of oceans like cane-juice, milk and curds might some day be interpreted in a manner not dissonant with modern knowledge.

*Jaipur*
*11 November 1965*

Sampurnanand
Governor, Rajasthan

# PREFACE

THE following pages are the result of my discussion with Pandit Dwarka Prasad Mishra, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, and former Vice-Chancellor of the Saugar University, whose interest in Ancient Indian History led him to investigate its geographical background. My book *Arab Geography* which deals with the geographical ideas of the Arabs drew his attention to corresponding ideas in the Arab and Persian works. It was felt that it may be profitable to sift the geographical notions contained in the various sections of the Purāṇas and to put them together in the form of a monograph which should present the Purāṇic point of view in a concise manner without affecting their intrinsic merit. This study was made possible with the help of Pandit Mishra's wide study of world history, profound knowledge of Sanskrit and keen geographical sense. They have been fully utilised in this monograph.

Of all the Purāṇas, the Vāyu was selected as a base for this work for two reasons: firstly, copies of the various editions of this Purāṇa are easily available. Secondly, the Vāyu includes essentially the geographical matter contained in all other Purāṇas and in addition gives more details in some cases. Other Purāṇas, the Viṣṇu, the Matsya, the Garuḍa, the Mārkaṇḍeya, the Bhāgawata and the Padma were consulted where the Vāyu text appeared to be doubtful or needed scrutiny.

The method of treatment followed in this study will speak for itself. Attempt has been made to present facts in simple language without disturbing the geographical sequence and the sense of the original texts. Interpretations and explanations, wherever they occur, are based on suitable topographical maps and corresponding accounts in standard geographical works. The chapter on 'Cosmogony and Cosmology' was an after-thought. It was felt that, though a geographer should not normally wander into these fields, a brief account of the Purāṇic notions on the origin of the Universe and the origin of the Earth would not be out of place here since the Purāṇic concept of oceans, continents and the major relief features of the earth are intimately connected with the origins of the Universe and the Earth. The chapter on astronomical notions was dropped since there are already standard works on Indian astronomy which deal with the size and shape of the earth, latitude and longitude, day and night, seasons, time, etc.

I cannot claim to have done more than follow a few trodden paths through a vast jungle—so often arid and thorny—of the ancient literature; yet, I may hope that the scattered ideas have been brought together into some sort of a coherent survey. At least I have, I believe, indicated some promising fields for further exploration and research.

Although this monograph has occupied me, sometimes to the point of obsession, for four years, I realise that I have not been able to do full justice to this fascinating subject. There is still much to be done and if this study could only arouse intelligent and scientific interest in our ancient literature, I shall feel amply rewarded for my labour.

In the publication of this monograph I received valuable help from various quarters. My most sincere thanks are due to Shri Sampurnanand, Governor, Rajasthan, for his helpful criticism and encouragement. I am giving in the appendix his and Pandit Dwarka Prasad Mishra's criticism on the Purāṇic Dwīpas and my observations on it. To Professor Babu Ram Saxena, Vice-Chancellor of Ravishanker University and Professor Dhirendra Varma, Vice-Chancellor of Jabalpur University, I offer my grateful acknowledgements for their advice in all matters connected with the translation and interpretation of Purāṇic texts.

I wish to extend my gratitude and sincere thanks to Dr. M. P. Sharma, Vice-Chancellor, and Justice G. P. Bhutt, former Vice-Chancellor, Saugar University, for providing all adequate facilities for work and helping me secure financial assistance from the University Grants Commission without which the publication of this work may not have been possible.

I am paticularly grateful to my respected friends Pandit K. D. Bajpai, Professor of Ancient Indian History, for many valuable suggestions regarding several chapters of the book and for assistance in its revision, and Pandit Parmanand Bajpai for helping me with useful suggestions regarding Hindu traditions and their geographical base.

To my colleagues Dr. V. C. Misra, Dr. P. C. Agarwal, Dr. Pramila Varma (of the Geography Department), Dr. Yogeshwar Pandey (of the Sanskrit Department) and especially Dr. N. P. Ayyar and Shri T. K. Nair who arranged and corrected the proofs and prepared the index, I am indebted for much ungrudging assistance and for their helpful attitude throughout in the production of this work.

I am also thankful to Shri T. K. N. Menon, Editor, People's Publishing House, Delhi, for extending all possible help and cooperation in the publication of this monograph.

S. M. A.

*Saugar,*
*18 May 1966*

# CONTENTS

*Foreword* v
*Preface* vii
INTRODUCTION 1
I SOURCES OF PURĀṆIC GEOGRAPHY 15
II PURĀṆIC CONTINENTS AND OCEANS 26
III THE MOUNTAIN SYSTEM OF THE PURĀṆAS 47
IV THE RIVER SYSTEM OF THE PURĀṆAS 60
V REGIONS OF THE JAMBŪ DWĪPA: NORTHERN REGIONS (RAMAṆAKA, HIRAṆMAYA AND UTTARA KURU) 73
VI REGIONS OF THE JAMBŪ DWĪPA: KETUMĀLA (OR THE BASIN OF THE OXUS) 88
VII REGIONS OF JAMBŪ DWĪPA: BHADRAVARṢA 99
VIII BHĀRATAVARṢA: PHYSICAL 109
IX BHĀRATAVARṢA: REGIONAL CLASSIFICATION 126
X BHĀRATAVARṢA: JANAPADAS OR COMMUNITIES 133
XI BHĀRATAVARṢA: JANAPADAS, TOWNS AND ROUTES (GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS) 170
XII BHĀṚATAVARṢA: ADJACENT ISLANDS AND PENINSULAS 179
XIII COSMOGONY, COSMOLOGY AND COSMOGRAPHY 184
*Notes and References* 197
*Appendix* 205
*Select Bibliography* 208
*Index* 215

# LIST OF MAPS AND DIAGRAMS

FOLLOWING PAGE

The World of the Rāmāyaṇa 22
The World of the Mahābhārata 32
The Purāṇic Dwīpas 48
Jambū Dwīpa of the Purāṇas 64
Himālayan and Trans-Himālayan Peaks of the Fifth and Higher Magnitudes 64
Jambū Dwīpa 64
Sketch of Hindūkush (or W. Niṣadha Range) 64
Northern Lands, I 80
Northern Lands, II 80
Ketumāla 96
Bhadravarṣa 112
Bhāratavarṣa: Negative Areas 112
Bhāratavarṣa: Physical 112
Bhāratavarṣa: Rivers 112
Bhāratavarṣa: Janapadas or Communities 144
Bhāratavarṣa: Ancient Trade Routes 176
Bhāratavarṣa: Urban and Religious Centres 176

# Introduction

THE word 'Purāṇa' means 'old'. The main object of the compilation of the Purāṇas is to preserve old traditions which come down from remote antiquity. They are derived from the same religious system as the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata and present peculiarities which point to their belonging to a later period, and to an important modification in the progress of opinion. They are popular sectarian compilations of different periods, of mythology, philosophy, history, geography and the sacred law, intended, as they are now used, for the purpose of religious instruction. A Purāṇa according to an early definition,[1] best exemplified by the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, should treat of five subjects, namely, primary creation, secondary creation, genealogies of gods and patriarchs, reigns of various Manus and the history of ancient dynasties[2]. This definition, however, is totally inapplicable to some of the Purāṇas, while it applies only partially to others. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa mentions its scope and source in the following words[3]:

> Accomplished in the purport of the Purāṇas, Vyāsa compiled a Paurāṇika Saṁhitā, consisting of historical and legendary traditions, prayers and hymns and sacred chronology. He had a distinguished disciple, called Sūta Romaharṣaṇa and to him the great Muni communicated the Purāṇas. Sūta had six scholars: Sumati, Agnivarcas, Mitrāyu, Sansapāyana, Akritavraṇa (called Kaśyapa) and Sāvarṇi. The last three composed three fundamental Saṁhitās, and Romaharṣaṇa himself compiled a fourth called Romahārṣaṇika. The substance of these four Saṁhitās is embodied in this (Viṣṇu) Purāṇa.

The geographical material of the Purāṇas is mostly contained in their first two books or 'Lakṣaṇas' which deal with cosmogony, cosmology and cosmography. They include, among other related matters, the origin of the universe and the earth, the oceans and the continents, mountain systems of the world, regions and their people and astronomical geography. Incidental references to the geography of different lands, particularly those of Bhārata, occur throughout the Purāṇas in the historical accounts contained in them. One has to put all the isolated facts together to get a picture of the lands and their people to which they refer or which they intended to describe. There are 18 works[4] which are recognised as *mahā* (great) Purāṇas.

## 1. *Brahma Purāṇa*

The main object of this Purāṇa is the promotion of the worship of Kṛṣṇa as Jagannātha. The early chapters of this work give a description of the creation, a short account of the Manvantaras and the history of dynasties down to the time of Kṛṣṇa. This is followed by a brief description of the universe. About one-third of the entire Purāṇa relates to the holiness of the Puruṣottama Kṣetra (Orissa) with its temples and sacred groves dedicated to the Sun, to Śiva and to Jagannātha.

## 2. *Padma Purāṇa*

Padma Purāṇa is a voluminous work divided into five books or khaṇḍas. The first two books, the Sṛiṣṭi Khaṇḍa and the Bhūmi Khaṇḍa deal with the creation and the description of the earth respectively. The early chapters of Sṛiṣṭi Khaṇḍa deal with cosmogony in the same style and often in the same words as the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. There are, however, additions characteristic of this Purāṇa, dealing with the virtues of the Puṣkara lake (near Ajmer) as a place of pilgrimage.

The Bhūmi Khaṇḍa defers any description of the earth until its close, filling up 127 chapters with legends of a very mixed character, some ancient and common to other Purāṇas, but the greater part, peculiar to itself, illustrative of the tīrthas or essential places of pilgrimage.

The Padma specifies the Jains, both by name and their practices, and talks of Mlecchas (barbarians, most probably Muslims) flourishing in India. Wilson places its composition between the 12th and the 15th or the 16th century A.D.

## 3. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*

Viṣṇu Purāṇa is perhaps the only work which conforms to the definition of a Purāṇa almost exactly. Its five books present in proper sequence the material essential to a Purāṇa. The first two books, as usual, deal with the creation and the description of the earth and the astronomical details. The geographical matter in this Purāṇa is rather succinct and condensed and omits the details found in the other Purāṇas.

Book 1 deals with primary creation.
Book 2 deals with secondary creation and includes:
- description of the earth, the seven Dwīpas and the seven oceans (Ch.2);

—description of Bhāratavarṣa (Ch. 3);
— description of the Seven Dwīpas, tides, etc. (Ch. 4);
— astronomical notions (Ch. 7-12).

4. *Vāyu Purāṇa*

It is divided into four Pādas, viz., Prakriyā, Upodbhāta, Anuṣānga and Upasaṁhāra, a classification peculiar to this Purāṇa. Its another peculiarity is the presence of an index or heads of chapters as found in the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa.

The Prakriyā portion contains a few chapters only and treats chiefly of elemental creation. The Upodghāta continues the subject of creation and describes the various kalpas or periods during which the world has existed.

The geographical section of this Purāṇa is more complete and detailed than that found in any other Purāṇas. It includes:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Chapters* | *34-35* | Jambū Dwīpa (1-96), (1-47) |
| *Chapter* | *36* | Mountains and lakes, east, south, west and north of Meru (1-33) |
| *Chapter* | *37* | Valleys between mountains, east of Meru (1-30) |
| *Chapter* | *38* | Valleys between mountains, south of Meru (1-36) |
| *Chapter* | *38* | Valleys between mountains, west of Meru (37-80) |
| *Chapter* | *38* | Valleys between mountains, north of Meru (37-80) |
| *Chapter* | *39* | Settlements (dwelling places) in the mountains (1-64) |
| *Chapter* | *40* | Devakūṭa Mountain (1-26) |
| *Chapter* | *41* | Kailāsa Mountain (1-82) |
| | | Himavān Mountain |
| | | Niṣadha Mountain |
| | | Pārijāta Mountain |
| | | Jurudhi Mountain (43-89) |
| *Chapter* | *42* | Rivers from Meru (1-80) |
| *Chapters* | *43-44* | Ketumāla and Bhadrāśva (1-38), (1-24) |
| *Chapter* | *45* | Bhāratavarṣa (1-137) |
| *Chapter* | *46* | Kimpuruṣa & Harivarṣa (1-35) |
| *Chapter* | *47* | Divisions of Bhāratavarṣa (1-80) |
| *Chapter* | *48* | Islands south of Bhāratavarṣa (1-43) |
| *Chapter* | *49* | The Seven Dwīpas (1-153) |

The pattern of the geographical section is very similar to that obtained in the Matsya or Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. Many passages are common to all.

### 5. *Bhāgavata*

Usually it is placed fifth in all the lists, but the Padma Purāṇa ranks it as the eighteenth, and calls it the essence of all the rest. It is the most popular Purāṇa and is held in the highest esteem by the Vaiṣṇavas. The Padma Purāṇa devotes a chapter to the māhātmya of this Purāṇa.

The Purāṇa deals with cosmogony and geographical notions in the 5th Skandha (part), which is divided into the following chapters:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Chapters* | *1-15* | Priyavrata, Agnidhara, Ṛṣabha |
| *Chapter* | *16* | The Bhuvana Kośa |
| *Chapter* | *17* | The Gaṅgā |
| *Chapters* | *18-19* | The Mysteries of the Varṣas |
| *Chapter* | *20* | The Dwīpas |
| *Chapters* | *21-26* | *Svar* and *Bhuvar*, the Sun, the Planets & Stars, the Pātālas, the Narakas |

The main features of the chapters (16-20) are:

(1) The minor details of the world geography, particularly that of Bhārata, are different from those in all other Purāṇas, excepting those given in the Padma Purāṇa.

(2) The lists of topographical features are relatively more condensed and sketchy as compared with those in others like Vāyu, Mārkaṇḍeya, Matsya, etc., while the list of people inhabiting the various regions of Bhārata is left out altogether.

### 6. *Nārada or Nāradīya Purāṇa*

The Nāradīya Purāṇa is said to have been communicated by Nārada to the Ṛṣis at Naimiṣāraṇya on the banks of the Gomatī river. The concluding passage, 'Let not this Purāṇa be recited in the presence of the "killers of cows" and "contemners of the gods"' shows that it was written after the advent of Muslims in India. Wilson and Pargiter consider it a compilation of the 16th or 17th century. There is very little material on cosmogony and cosmography in this Purāṇa and the geographical content too is insignificant.

### 7. *Mārkaṇḍa or Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*

It is that Purāṇa in which, 'commencing with the story of the birds that were acquainted with right and wrong, everything is narrated by Mārkaṇḍeya'. The birds were of celestial origin. They were born on the field of Kurukṣetra and lived in the Vindhya Mountains. The Purāṇa provides a sort of a supplement to the Mahābhārata filling in the blanks left in some of its narrations. Wilson assigns it to the 9th or 10th century A.D.

The account of the creation and description of the earth is much the same as in other Purāṇas, although it has some characteristic features. The first such feature is the Nava Khaṇḍa (Ch. 57) of the Purāṇa which in fact contains the strictly geographical information given in some other major Purāṇas. But the Mārkaṇḍeya has also another section (Ch. 58) called Kūrmavibhāga or the Kūrma-nivāsa, containing a list of the countries and peoples of Bhārata arranged according to the position of the country conceived as a tortoise (Kūrma) resting on water and looking eastward. This arrangement is based on earlier astronomical works like those of Parāśara and Varāhamihira. Most of these countries and peoples have been mentioned in the Nava Khaṇḍa section but the Kūrmavibhāga contains valuable topographical information not given in the other Purāṇas. On the whole, the pattern of this Purāṇa is similar to those of the Matsya, Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa and Vāmana Purāṇas.

### 8. *Agni Purāṇa*[5]

The early chapters of this Purāṇa describe the Avatāras; while in the chapters dealing with the narratives of Rāma and Kṛsna, it follows the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. The chapters describing the earth and the universe are the same as in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa while the Māhātmyas or the legends of holy places particularly of Gayā are added to them. There are also chapters on mysticism, medicine, rhetoric, prosody, grammar, etc.

The geographical account is exactly the same as in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa.

### 9. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*

This is the first Purāṇa which gives an account of the dynasties of the Kali age. The Matsya, Vāyu and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas which preceded this Purāṇa, appear subsequently to have incorporated into their accounts of the above dynasties material obtained from it.

The first portion of the Purāṇa deals with the creation followed by the traditional account of the Earth and its contents. The geographical section follows the same pattern as that of the earlier Purāṇas. There is some curious matter in the last chapters relating to the Magas, the silent worshippers of the Sun from Śāka-dwīpa, which supports the conclusion that the compiler had adopted the Persian term *Magha* and connected the fire worshippers of Iran with those of India.

The work is supposed to have been communicated by Kṛṣṇa to Yudhiṣṭhira, at a great assemblage of holy persons at the coronation of the latter after the conclusion of the great Mahābhārata War.

### 10. *Brahma Vaivarta Purāna*

This is divided into 4 khaṇḍas, or books, viz., the Brahma, the Prakriti, the Gaṇeśa and the Kṛṣṇa Jamma Khaṇḍas, the latter throughout enhancing the interest and importance of the work, the great mass of which is taken up by the detailed and lengthy descriptions of Vrindāvana and Gokula.

The geographical section is identical with the corresponding account obtained in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and the Agni Purāṇa.

### 11. *Liṅga Purāṇa*

This work, like the other Purāṇas gives a description of the universe and of the royal dynasties up to the time of Kṛṣṇa, but it mainly concentrates on the narration of legends, enjoining of rites and recitation of prayers designed to do honour to Śiva in his various forms.

### 12. *Varāha Purāṇa*

A considerable portion of this Purāṇa is devoted to descriptions of various tīrthas or places of Vaiṣṇava pilgrimage. The description of Mathurā is replete with various particulars concerning the shrines of that city, constituting the Mathurā Māhātmya.

### 13. *Skanda Purāṇa*

All scholars agree that the Skanda Purāṇa does not exist as a complete work, and that only fragments in the form of Saṁhitās, Khaṇḍas and Māhātmyas found in various parts of the country constitute portions of this Purāṇa. The most celebrated of these is the Kāśī Khaṇḍa (in 15,000 stanzas), which gives a detailed description of the temples of Śiva in or adjacent to Vārāṇasī. The story of Agastya probably presents in the form of a legend, an account of the propagation of Hinduism in South India. The Utkala Khaṇḍa similarly highlights the holiness of Orissa and Puruṣottama Kṣetra or Jagannātha, and Bhuvaneśwara. Other Khaṇḍas, e.g., Brahmottara Khaṇḍa, Revā Khaṇḍa, Himavat Khaṇḍa, etc. emphasize the sanctity of local temples or group of temples in certain regions.

This Purāṇa contains, like Mārkaṇḍeya, Brahma, Matsya and Vāyu, the longest lists of countries and peoples of India.

### 14. *Vāmana Purāṇa*

Besides giving the usual description of the creation of the universe, this Purāṇa explains the sanctity of certain regions particularly the Kedareśwara and Badarikāśrama in the Himālayas and the holiness of Sthāṇutīrtha—i.e., pools at Thāneśvara and Kurukṣetra between the Yamunā and the Sutlej.

The geographical section of this Purāṇa follows the same pattern and contains lists of Janapadas and other features similar to those given in the Matsya, Vāyu, Mārkaṇḍeya and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas. The Vāmana Purāṇa, however, shows a tendency to present the descriptions of features and people independently. It also furnishes further information, for instance about the Turuṣkas and Andhras, which is not found in any other Purāṇas except the Garuḍa.

### 15. *Kūrma Purāṇa*

The list of Janapadas follows the shorter version of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa but contains a fuller list of rivers after Vāyu. This Purāṇa does not probably date back to a time earlier than that of Alberuni (*c.* 1030 A.D.).

### 16. *Matsya Purāṇa*

After the usual dialogue between Sūta and the Ṛṣis this Purāṇa opens with an account of the Matsya or the 'Fish Avatāra' of Viṣṇu in which he preserves a king named Manu[6] as well as the seeds of all things in an arc from the waters of that inundation which in the season of a *Pralaya* overspreads the world.[7] The contents of this Purāṇa have many words and much material found also in works like the Mahābhārata, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and the Padma Purāṇa.

The Bhuvanakośa section of the Purāṇa commences with Chapter 113 and covers the following topics:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Chapter 113* | The extent of Jambū Dwīpa, its mountains and varṣas (1-77) |
| *Chapter 114* | Bhāratavarṣa (1-55) |
| | Kiṁpuruṣa-varṣa (56-65) |
| | Hari-varṣa (66-68) |
| | Ilāvṛta-varṣa (69-86) |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Chapter 115* | Description of Tapovana |
| *Chapter 116* | Description of River Airāvatī |
| *Chapter 117* | Himālayas (1-18) |
| *Chapter 118* | Hermitage of Atri (in the Himālayas) trees and birds of the Himālayas |
| *Chapter 119* | Himālayan cave, Āyatana |
| *Chapter 120* | Hermitage of Aila in the Himālayas |
| *Chapter 121* | Mountains and Rivers of the Himālayas (1-82) |
| *Chapter 122* | Śaka Dwīpa (1-44) |
| | Kuśa Dwīpa (45-77) |
| | Krauñca Dwīpa (93-104) |
| | Śālmali Dwīpa (93-104) |
| *Chapter 123* | Gomeda Dwīpa (1-11) |
| | Puṣkara Dwīpa (12-29) |
| | The Tides (30-40) |
| | Trees in Dwīpas (35-40) |
| | Miscellaneous information about the Earth (41-56) |

Chapters 124 to 128 deal with the Sun, the Moon, the Planets and the Stars, whose description is the same as in the other Purāṇas.

### 17. *Garuḍa Purāṇa*

It contains a brief account of the creation, but a greater part of it is occupied with the descriptions of vratas or religious observances, of holy days, of sacred places dedicated to the Sun, etc. It also contains treatises on astrology, palmistry and precious stones and medicine (*Preta Kalpa*). The Purāṇa exhibits considerable freedom in its geographical section and, along with the Vāmana Purāṇa, adds further details to those contained in the Mārkaṇḍeya, the Vāyu and the Matsya. This appears to be one of the latest Purāṇas in point of time.

### 18. *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*

This Purāṇa, like the Skanda, is not available as such but is in the form of Khaṇḍas and Māhātmyas derived from it. The facility with which any tract may be attributed to the non-existent original, and the advantage that has been taken of its absence to compile a variety of unauthorised fragments, have given to the Brahmāṇḍa, Skanda and Padma Purāṇas a doubtful character.[8] The geographical section of this Purāṇa appears to be a late copy (about 1030 A.D.) of the Vāyu with slight alterations and modifications introduced by the copyists.

The style of all the Purāṇas is typical. Information is conveyed to the reader in the form of dialogues: questions by a pupil and answers by Romaharṣaṇa (called Sūta, a disciple of Vyāsa), who is the master and who unveils the mysteries of the universe to one who does not know. His answers are relevant to the questions put to him and he tries to make them easy enough to be comprehended by the listener—the common man. He makes the answers colourful, personifies diverse facts and phenomena of nature and terse philosophical notions and presents them in the form of legends and adventures of persons to make them appealing to the imagination of the pupil and to prepare him for the study of the source literature, particularly the Vedas and the epics.

The Purāṇas faithfully represent the ideas regarding the origin of things and their distribution which were universally believed in ancient India. But the interpolations and modifications which subsequently crept into them, their inculcation of the worship of particular deities, the incongruous combination of a creator with the independent evolution of matter, and the deification of metaphor and mysticism, led to several incongruities and much disfigurement of narrative. It is, however, possible to read the ideas which the 'master' intended to convey to the 'pupil'. Here are a few examples:

(1) The patriarch Dakṣa had by Prasūti 24 daughters: hear from me their names: Śraddhā (faith), Lakṣmī (prosperity), Dhṛti (steadiness), Kriyā (action, devotion), Puṣṭi (thriving), Medhā (intelligence), Tuṣṭi (satisfaction), Buddhi (intellect), Lajjā (modesty), Vapu (body), Śānti (expiation), Siddhi (perfection), Kīrtti (fame): these thirteen daughters of Dakṣa were married to Dharma (righteousness). The other eleven bright-eyed and younger daughters of the Patriarch were Khyāti (celebrity), Satī (truth), Sambhūti (fitness), Smṛti (remembrance), Prīti (love), Anasūyā (charity), Kṣamā (patience), Sannati (humility), Ūrjjā (energy), Swāhā (offering) and Swadhā (oblation). These maidens were respectively wedded to the Munis: Bhṛgu, Bhava, Mārīchi, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Atri and Vasiṣṭha; to Fire (Vahni) and to the Pitris (progenitors) ( Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. I, Ch. VII, 23, 25).

In the above narrative obviously the persons are manifestly allegorical, being personifications of various types of intelligence and virtues and religious rites, and therefore appropriately wedded to the probable authors of the Hindu Code of religion and morals or to the equally allegorical representation of that Code, Dharma or moral and religious duty.

(2) The master (Pārāśara) describes the creation of Swāyambhuva Manu, the first man (Adam of the Bible and the Koran) and tells us how through him the earth was peopled in due course of time. Swāyambhuva Manu had two sons: Priyavrata and Uttānapāda.

> Priyavrata married Kāmyā (or Kanyā), the daughter of the Patriarch Kardama and had by her two daughters Smṛti and Kukṣi, and ten sons, Agnidhara, Agnibāhu, Vapuṣmat, Dyutimat, Medha, Medhātithi, Bhavya, Sabala, Putra and Jyotiṣmat. Of these, three, i.e., Medha, Putra and Agnibāhu, adopted a religious life. Priyavrata having divided the earth into seven continents (dwīpas) gave them to his other seven sons. To Agnidhara, he gave Jambū Dwīpa; to Medhātithi he gave Plakṣa Dwīpa, to Vapuṣmat Śālmali Dwīpa, to Jyotiṣmat Kuśa Dwīpa, to Dyutimat Krauñca Dwīpa, to Bhavya Śaka Dwīpa and to Savala Puṣkara Dwīpa.
>
> Agnidhara, the king of Jambū Dwīpa, had nine sons.... He apportioned Jambū Dwīpa among these nine sons. He gave the country called Hima, south of Himavat to Nabhi; Hemakūṭa to Kiṁpuruṣa; the country of Niṣadha to Harivarṣa, the country in the centre of which Meru is situated to Ilāvṛta; the countries between it and the Nila mountains to Ramya; the country north of it called Śweta to Hiraṇvata, the country bounded by the Sṛñgavān mountain, to the north of Śweta mountain, to Kuru; the countries to the east of Meru to Bhadrāśwa and Gandhamādana and to the west of Meru to Ketumāla....
>
> Nabin who had for his portion the country of Hima... had a hundred sons, the oldest of whom was Bharata.... Under these princes, Bhāratavarṣa was divided into nine portions, and their descendants successively held possession of them for 71 periods of the aggregate of the four ages (or for the reign of a manu).... (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. II, Ch. 1).

Here the Purāṇa wants to tell us three things:

(a) The common origin of Man, i.e., of all the races of mankind is traceable to one centre on this planet. This is in accordance with the modern monogenist theory which holds that all the varieties of mankind are zoologically of one species. The opposite view that several distinct races of man had independent origins (polygenist theory) has been discredited.

(b) Radiating from that common centre, seven human groups occupied seven different regions of the world and the human society or civilisation developed independently in each of these seven centres. This is in consonance with the modern view that the world's primary races belong to seven different climatic regions of the world where they took shape and developed characteristic features under the influence of their peculiar physical environment.

(c) Later, from one of these regions (in Jambū Dwīpa according to the Purāṇas) nine human groups occupied the nine sub-regions of this land mass. One of these nine occupied Bhārata.[9]

(3) The Purāṇas narrate a legend about Gaṅgā. This great river was detained amidst the tresses of Lord Śiva, in order to punish her for her arrogance, until the divinity was moved by the penance and prayers of King Bhagīratha to set her free (Vāyu Purāṇa, Ch. 47, 32-35).

This is obviously a reference to a 'climatic pulse' in the past ages. A glacial period of a very short duration occurred in northern India leading to the accumulation of snow on the mountain peaks, lesser melting of the snow in summers and consequently the abnormal decrease in the volume of water carried by the Gaṅgā. Waters were 'released' on the restoration of the normal or warmer conditions after a short interval (categorically speaking, 'hundred years').

(4) Pārāśara—Having thus described to you the system of the world in general, I will now explain to you the dimensions and situation of the Sun and other luminaries:

> The chariot of the Sun is 9,000 leagues in length, and the pole is of twice that longitude; the axle is 15,700,000 leagues long, on which is fixed a wheel with three naves, five spokes and six peripheries....

Here the three naves are the three divisions of the day, i.e., morning, noon and night; the five spokes are the five cyclic years, and the six peripheries are the six seasons. (The Bhāgavata Purāṇa explains the three naves as the three parts of the year, each of 4 months' duration and the twelve spokes as the twelve months).

(5) The Master relates the story of the Syamantaka gem (mentioned in Visṇu Purāṇa, Bk. IV, Ch. 13 as well as in the Bhāgavata, Vāyu, Matsya and Brahma Purāṇas and Harivaṁśa, etc.), which is very interesting as it presents a curious and no doubt a faithful picture of ancient manners, in the self-government of a kindred clan, in the acts of personal violence which are committed, in the feuds which ensue, in the public gatherings that are held, and the part that is taken by the elders and by women in all community work or activities.

(6) The destruction of Hastināpur is described in another account (Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, Ch. 35):

> Having thus spoken, the Kuru chiefs, unanimously refusing to set the son of Hari at large, immediately returned to the city (Hastināpur). Bala, reeling with intoxication, and filled with the wrath which their contemptuous language had excited, struck the ground furiously with his heel, which split open with a thunderous sound that reverberated through space. With eyes glowing with rage, and with a frowning brow he exclaimed, 'What arrogance is this in such vile and spineless creatures?

I will take this capital of the Kauravas with all the sons of Kuru, and cast the city of elephant (Hastināpur) into the Bhāgīrathī'.

This evidently describes the occurrence of an earthquake which shook the city of Hastināpur and the consequent change in the course of the river Gaṅgā which destroyed the capital of the Kurus. The capital was subsequently removed to Kauśāmbī during the time of King Nicakṣu.

These few examples illustrate the style of the Purāṇas and also bring out the value of the traditions which have been so well preserved in these works. In general, all the world over, the early history of the nations consists more or less of traditions handed down by memory since the ages before the invention of writing. Traditions are still more lasting when handed down in fixed words as in the case of the Purāṇas, especially when the poets have set them in verse. Among other nations of the world as well the poets, for instance, Homer and Firdausi, have preserved many picturesque incidents of history although they have not the historian's conscience about facts. Eager to rouse and delight their audience, to flatter the national pride of their people and the family pride of the chieftain, in whose court they recited their poems, the poets brought in real names and events, but they manœuvred them to suit their dramatic sense or even completely fabricated history. This is not true of the Purāṇas which very often present historically correct facts, although, as mentioned earlier, they personify abstract ideas or inanimate objects with the sole purpose of making facts easily digestible and ensuring the easy remembrance of events. Thus in the case of the former, it is too hard a task to sift out historic truth from the mixture of natural events and exact source of knowledge, while in the latter case it is possible to visualise the factual background.

The geographical matter contained in different Purāṇas represents distinct stages in the progress of the geographical knowledge of the world in general and of Bhārata in particular. In some Purāṇas we find a bare sketch of world geography, while others give a detailed account of even distant lands. This expansion of geographical knowledge was due to (a) military expeditions which carried Indians to far-off lands, (b) commercial relations with lands across the northern mountain barriers and southern seas, (c) intense religious and missionary activities which made travel desirable, if not imperative, to distant and normally inaccessible regions and (d) political and diplomatic relations with foreign countries. This observation applies to the geography of India as well. Of all the Purāṇas, the Vāyu, the Mārkaṇḍeya, the Skanda, the Brahmāṇḍa, the Varāha, the Matsya and the Bhāgavata pay special attention to, and provide more detailed information about, the geography of India and the world. In some Purāṇas special regions or special topics receive more attention than others:

for instance, in the Padma (Bhūmi Khaṇḍa) its greater part is illustrative of places of pilgrimage; the Agni Purāṇa emphasises details of the Gayā region; the Brahma and Varāha Purāṇas deal at length with the lands around Mathurā and Purī; the Vāmana Purāṇa with those of Thaneśvara, and the Padma Purāṇa with the Ajmer region. This is natural since the Purāṇas were evidently written in different periods and under different circumstances. It may be possible to reconstruct a tentative chronology of the different Purāṇas on the basis of the progress of geographical knowledge evidenced in them. Dr Hazra[10] and Dr Sircar[11] have attempted a chronology for the Purāṇas on extra-geographical considerations, mainly linguistic and historical, and it would be interesting to compare their conclusions with those reached by the geographer. However, this aspect of the Purāṇas has not been discussed here since it was considered beyond the scope of this work.

Since the Purāṇas were not intended to be textbooks of geography, they cannot be expected to present geographical facts and ideas in a logical order, though in some cases the logical order is maintained. Geographical information in them is only incidental and is inserted wherever it is considered relevant to the topic or theme under which it occurs. In fact, we do not find a definte or precise synonym for the term 'geography' in the Purāṇas or even in contemporary literature. Various names appear to denote 'geography' in different works; for instance, Bhuvana-Kośa (treasure of Terrestrial Mansions), Bhuvana-Sāgara (Ocean of Terrestrial Mansions or Inhabited Lands), Bhuvana Khaṇḍa (Section of the Earth), Trilokya Darpaṇa (Mirror of the Worlds), Kṣetra-Samāsa (Combination of countries), etc.

The chapters in this study have been arranged in the following order. The first chapter deals with the sources of the Purāṇas and attempts to clarify the earlier notions on which the Purāṇic geography is apparently based. The next chapter shows how the idea of the Purāṇic dwīpas and oceans evolved in course of time and also deals with the extent of the Purāṇic 'world' and its different 'dwīpas'. This is followed by a series of chapters on the regional geography of the Jambū Dwīpa which occupies a prominant place in the Purāṇic geography. The topographical features of these regions, which could be identified, have been plotted and indicated on suitable maps to facilitate the study of their Purāṇic descriptions. The chapter on Bhāratavarṣa is not claimed to be comprehensive. It only deals with the essentials of its geography, so that it may be kept within reasonable limits and in order that the repetition of those geographical facts regarding this varṣa may be avoided about which there is little controversy and which are discussed in detail in the well-known works of foreign and

Indian scholars. A list of these is appended at the end of the chapter on Bhāratavarṣa. However, a few maps of Bhārata, depicting all these facts, have been added to present them in a more definite and precise form and in a systematic manner.

A chapter on cosmology which deals with the origin of the earth and the universe of which the earth is a small component, has been added at the end. Much of the discussion in this chapter might appear to be irrelevant from the point of view of 'pure geography', but the addition of this chapter was considered necessary because the Purāṇic cosmography is dependent on and bound up with its cosmology and cosmogony. The Purāṇas trace things to their origins, and their geography too begins with the origin of the earth and the universe.

# CHAPTER I Sources of Puranic Geography

THE geography of the Purāṇas chiefly hinges on religion. It has its tap root in ancient traditions and religious compositions which are infused with the spirit of adventure and appreciation of scenic beauty (both of which constitute a favourable equipment in the making of geographers). Every physical phenomenon, every major or spectacular landmark on the earth's surface, has a religious background for Indians; every mountain peak, every river, every crag, every useful tree is sacred and is preserved in these traditions. They provide the physical background of events which occurred on the world stage since times immemorial and have been recorded in what is called the ancient Indian sacred literature. This sacred literature, which goes back to two or three thousand years B.C., abounds in geographical material and is the primary source of Purāṇic geography.

## *The Vedas*

The Ṛgveda Saṁhitā mentions tribes, rivers and a few mountains and deals particularly with the natural phenomena which appealed to the aesthetic sense of their authors. It contains accounts of (1) the fight of Indra and the gods against Vṛtra and his herds; (2) the fight of Indra and Divodāsa against Sambara and his army; (3) the fight of Kutsa against Suṣṇa and his army; (4) the fight of Indra against various Asura chiefs; (5) the recovery of cows by the Angirasas from the Pāṇis; (6) the war carried on by Ten Kings against Sudāsa; (7) the wars that were waged between different countries; (8) the activities of the various priestly clans which were the authors of the Ṛgvedic hymns; (9) the exploits of Indra, Aśvins and other gods; (10) the tribes which belonged to the Āryan stock and also of those tribes which came under the Āryan influences.

The variation of the above mentioned events naturally introduces facts pertaining to descriptive geography–i.e., the various lands, their physical content, their boundaries, their people as well as ideas regarding physical geography, i.e., atmosphere, land and water. The main contribution, however, of the Ṛgveda to the Purāṇic geography is its cosmology and cosmogony which are repeated in the original or modified form in all the Purāṇas.

Ideas regarding the causes of the winds, clouds and rainfall, the movement of the sun, the moon and the planets, the phenomena of the seasons, of day and night, of eclipses and the cardinal points, all of which are linked with problems of cosmology and cosmogony, are reflected in subsequent literature, particularly the Purāṇas. The topography of the Ṛgveda is limited to the description of 21 rivers[1] in all (5, 53, 9), (10, 64, 6) and (75, 5, 6). In verse (10,64,9) the Saraswatī, Sarayū and Sindhu are mentioned as the 'leaders' of these rivers—the Saraswatī as that of the first group (10, 75, 5), the Sindhu of the second group (10,75,6) and the Sarayū of the third (5, 53, 9). Of the mountains only the Himavanta (10, 121, 4) and Muñjavān (10,34,1) find a place in the Ṛgvedic hymns. All these rivers, their names and the order in which they are mentioned figure in the Purāṇas.

In the Ṛgveda most of all the importance appears to have been attached to natural vegetation, fauna and human groups (tribes), settlements and occupations. A classification of natural vegetation into vṛkṣa (trees), oṣadhi or virudha (shrubs) and tṛṇa (grass) and characteristics of different plants[2] in each group are provided in the Ṛgveda (10,97). Natural vegetation played an important part in the religion of the Āryans. Ritual performances were made by using numerous products derived from plants, and certain plants acquired the status of gods. As such, all these plants have an important place in later literature, especially in the Purāṇas. The same applies to animals which were classified by Vedic Āryans as wild beasts (mṛga), amphibious animals (śiṁśumāra), aquatic animals (purikāyas), insects and worms (kīṭa), birds (pakṣī) and domestic animals.

Facts of human geography, i.e., those pertaining to man's adjustment to nature and their ideas and actions have been elaborately and precisely dealt with in the Ṛgveda and are intimately associated with religious ritual. Every human activity related to the earth and its resources, i.e., agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation, industries, means of transport, houses and settlements, diet, clothing and social relations, finds a suitable place in the sacred book and provides a key to corresponding accounts in the Purāṇas and other ancient works. The Ṛgveda is the ultimate source of all the knowledge which was embodied in subsequent literature including the Purāṇas.

The three Vedas (the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda and the Atharvaveda), the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, the Upaniṣads and the Kalpa Sūtras belong to a later period and were composed during several centuries which followed the compilation of the Ṛgvedic hymns. Like the Ṛgveda they too are not geographical treatises, but some of them like the Atharvaveda, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras contain geographical material (mentioned below) which in one form or the other found its way into the Purāṇas.

The astronomical notions of the Purāṇas are not only based on, but also in many cases borrowed from the later Vedas, the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras. They contribute most of the ideas regarding the shape of the earth, the movement of the sun, the moon and the planets, the solstices, lunar mansions, the phases of the moon, directions and associated gods, computation of time, day and night, year and its components to all the Purāṇas which either repeat or modify them to suit the exigencies of narration.

The description of topographical features in the later Vedic literature is slightly better developed than in the Ṛgveda. This is natural, since with the 'Āryanisation' of the far-flung areas, the need for a detailed knowledge of those areas was felt and provided for in the later works. As mentioned earlier, only a few mountains are referred to in the Ṛgveda. To the Ṛgvedic Himavanta and Mūñjavān, the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka and the Sūtra texts add an important feature—the Mahāmeru, which is the core of the Purāṇic mountain system. The Atharvaveda (19, 39, 8) and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (1, 8, 1-10) add Navaprabhraṁśana in connection with the Great Deluge. The Yajurveda (Mait. Saṁh. and Kāṭhaka Saṁh.) for the first time mentions the three-peaked Trikakubha (or Trikakud of Atharvaveda and Śatp. Brāh.). Taitt. Āraṇyaka refers to two other mountains, the Maināka and the Krauñca. The southern Mountain (most probably the Vindhyas) appears' for the first time in the Kauśitakī Up. (11, 13), while the name Vindhya occurs expressly in the Vasiṣṭha Dharma Sūtra (1, 9) and the Manusmṛti (11, 21). To this the Sūtras add the Pāripātra as the southern boundary of the Āryan land.

The Saṁhitās and Upaniṣads enlarge and systematise the drainage pattern of the Ṛgveda. The Śat. Brāh. and Ait. Brāh. refer to a set of seven rivers flowing to the west while Bṛhadā. Up. adds another set of seven rivers flowing to the east. To the Ṛgvedic list is added Sadānīrā (probably Gaṇḍaka, Śat. Brāh. I, 4, 1, 14), Vāraṇāvatī (Atharvaveda, IV, 7, 1) and a few minor rivers. The list, however, swells and becomes comprehensive in the epics and is later transferred to the Purāṇas.

The **Purānic** references to climatic elements are meagre as compared with those occurring in the Vedic literature. They no doubt draw upon the latter but nowhere do they improve upon or excel the older accounts. It may be argued that perhaps the Purāṇas did not attach so much importance to climate as the Vedic Āryans did, or they considered it irrelevant to their subject matter, and were content with the knowledge of its elements as conveyed by the ancients. The division of the atmosphere (*rajas*) into divya and pārthivya (Ṛgveda, IV, 53, 3), or into Uttama, Parama and Tṛtīya (Ṛgveda, X, 45, 3) which anticipated the modern atmospheric layers, is quite old, so are the types of winds, Vāyu, Maruts and Rudra referred to in the Ṛgveda, Taitt. Saṁh and Ait. Brāh. The phenomena of rainfall and its causes, types of clouds and climatic regions are directly or indirectly mentioned in the Ṛgveda and other Saṁhitās. The Purāṇas very often repeat, sometimes neglect, and only very rarely add to these ideas.

The Ait. and other Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras add the names of more trees, animals, shrubs and grasses typical of the Gangetic valley to those mentioned in the Ṛgveda. The Atharvaveda adds and describes an important class of shrubs with medicinal properties and used as cures, such as kuṣṭha, jangīra, apāmārga, arundhatī, paṭa, etc. (Atharvaveda, XII, 1, 2). It also gives some of the trees a higher status among plants, for instance, the pīpala or aśhvattha was supposed to 'protect its worshipper from superhuman foes and help him in overcoming his rivals' (Atharvaveda, III, 6). The udumbara (gūlar), though mentioned in the Ṛgveda gained paramount importance as a sacred tree in the post-Ṛgvedic period. Nyagrodha (the banyan tree, meaning literally, 'growing downwards') was also considered sacred and its divine properties are for the first time mentioned in the Ait. Brāh. (VII, 30), Tait. Saṁh. and Sūtras. Bilva or vilva (bela), karkandhu or badarī (bera), plakṣa (pākhar), karsmaria, khajūra, varaṇa, vikarkaṭa, rajjudata (lesora), rohitaka, talasa, pitūdaru, vibhīdaka (whose nuts were used as dice) and arka are some of the important trees added by the Atharvaveda, Taitt. Saṁh. and the Brāhmaṇas. Gobhila gives a long list of trees, most of which are not identifiable, e.g., tilvaka, bādhaka, the nimba tree, rajavnika, aralu, dadhititha, kovidāra and śleṣamalka. Occasionally veṇu (bamboo), amba (mango) and śiṁśapa (shisham) are also mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads. The Purāṇas attach equal importance to sacred trees, shrubs and grasses and add a few more to each class while presenting geographical or non-geographical material. It is to be noted that practically all the plants mentioned above belong to Northern India.

The cult of sacrifice and hunting economy attached great importance to certain animals—both wild and domestic. 'Paśu' in the Vedic language included man among the five or seven animals fit for sacrifice. Taitt. Saṁh. (IV, 2, 10, 1-4), Vāj. Saṁh. (XIII, 47, 51) and the Atharvaveda (XI, 2, 9) mention five: man, cow, sheep, goat and horse. Atharvaveda (III, 10, 6) adds the ass and the camel to this list and in general provides categories of birds and animals in four verses (Atharvaveda, XI, 2, 24 and 25; XII, 1, 49 and 51) which lay down the pattern of classification of animals including birds, reptiles, insects and worms in later works. The Purāṇas follow this classification and add members to each category, but such additions are incidental and not deliberate. These additions are the direct result of their observation or experience of them in other regions of India.

The human geography, which finds its roots in the Ṛgveda is carried over and reoriented in subsequent Vedic literature. The reorientation and revision of the facts of human geography (including economic, social and cultural) has been a progressive and continuous process, since it is linked with the progress of man and the crystallisation of human activities. The specialisation of occupations and its corollary, the caste system, the status of different human groups, development of civic sense and growing mental and physical needs, naturally resulted in the changing pattern of physical and cultural landscape. The simple Ṛgveda pattern gradually developed into the complicated but picturesque pattern of the Purāṇas.

The population pattern, i.e., its distribution and agglomeration is frequently referred to in the Vedic literature. The 'grāmas' and 'puras' (strongholds or forts) of the Ṛgveda and the 'nagaras' of the post-Ṛgvedic period clearly point out the nucleation of population as well-defined settlements in the land of the Āryans, although but few names of cities or towns appear in their discussions. For instance, in the vast Vedic literature mentioned above, only a few cities like Āsandīvat (Ait. Brāh., VIII, 21), Kampila (Vāj. Saṁh., XXIII, 18; Śat. Brāh. XIII, 2, 8, 3), Paricakrā (Śat. Brāh., XIII, 5, 4, 7) and Kauśāmbeya or Kuśāmba (Śaṭ. Brāh., XII, 2, 2, 13) receive some attention. n the Epic and the Purāṇic periods when the impact of politics on religion became more pronounced, references to political divisions, capital cities and administrative and strategic centres increased along with those to religious centres. But the genesis of human settlements, irrespective of their size, that is, their division into segregated quarters of different castes, persisted throughout.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the Vedic literature to the Purāṇas (next to its cosmogony and cosmology) is its system of regional division. The Vedic regions are in fact 'human' or 'cultural' regions, i.e., the division of land into the 'countries' of different tribes or communities. This system became so popular and deep-rooted that none of the later works, religious or secular, could break away from it. The pattern was laid down by the Vedas for all time to come.

The Ṛgveda refers repeatedly to the 'five tribes' collectively known as 'pañcajanāh' or 'pañcakṣiti'—i.e., Anus, Druhyus, Purus, Turvasas and Yadus. But it may be noted that the frequency of such references ceases after the Brāhmaṇas. The Alinas, Bhalanas, Pakthas, Viṣāṇis and Śivis were the other five tribes that took part in the Battle of Ten Kings against Sudāsa (Ṛgveda, VII, 18, 7). The Kṛvis (Pañcālas of later period) are also mentioned many times in the Ṛgveda. In Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the name of a Pañcāla king is given as Kraivya Pañcāla. Other tribes, e.g., the Mūjavantas or Muñjavantas, the Ārjikas, the Gandhārīs, Bharatas, Tritsus (one of whose kings, Sudāsa, fought a decisive battle against the Ten Kings referred to above and against three non-Āryan tribes, Ajas, Śigrus and Yakṣas) and the Uśīnara tribe also figure in the Ṛgveda. In addition to these, the Ṛgveda refers to the non-Āryan tribes of the Kīkaṭas, Pārāvatas, Simyus and Paṇis[3], the latter being the most prominent.

The later Vedic literature adds to this list the Kurus and the Pañcālas (Kāṭh. Saṁh. and Kauśīṭ Up. and Bṛhaḍ. Up.) who reached their zenith in the Brāhmaṇa period, Vashas (associated with Uśīnaras and living somewhere near Kurus and Pañcālas) (Ait. Br., VIII, 14), Kāśī, Kosala and Videha (Brāhmaṇas), Magadhas (Śat. Brāh., I, 4, 1, 10 and Atharvaveda, V, 22, 19) Aṅgas (Atharvaveda, V, 22, 14), Puṇḍras (Ait. Br., VII, 8), Vañgas (Ait. Āraṇ., II, 1, 1), Matsyas (Śat. Brāh., XIII, 5, 4, 9) Sātvanas (Ait. Br., VIII, 14), Pulindas (Ait., Br., VII, 18), Vidarbhas (Ait. Br., VII, 34), Andhras (Ait. Br., VII, 18, where they, along with the Puṇḍras, Śabaras, Pulindas and Mūtibas are described as inhabitants beyond the boundaries of the Āryan territory). Kaliṅgas, Avantīs and Saurāṣṭras appear in Baudhāyana (Dh. Sūt. I, 1, 2, 13-15), the first two being considered unholy. Each of these tribes or people was so much associated with a particular region that land and people became synonymous. In many cases where these people formed kingdoms or republics, the name persisted for a long time. Thus Kāśī region, Kāśīs and Kāśī kingdom; Vidharbha region, Vidharbhas and Vidharba kingdom; Aṅga reign, Aṅgas and Aṅga kingdom, etc., became standard names which were carried over in the works of the post-Vedic period including the Purāṇas.

If we reconstruct a map of Vedic India, it will show that the Āryan land included the Indo-Gangetic Plain up to the Brahmputrā on the East, Hindūkush on the North-West, Indus on the West, Himālayas on the North and the Vindhyan hills on the South. It will be interesting to compare this map with that of the Purāṇas which is given elsewhere in this work.

It may be mentioned that the Vedic texts contain reminiscences of the land which the Āryans occupied before they entered India. Two such areas are desribed thus:

> Then in the northern quarter the All-gods anointed him six days with the Pañcaviṁsa, and with this triplet and his yajus and these exclamations for sovereignty. Therefore, in this northern quarter, the lands of Uttara Kurus and the Uttara-Madras, beyond the Himavanta their (kings) are anointed in accordance with the action of gods (Ait. Br., VIII, 14).

The Uttara Kuru is not mentioned in the Ṛgveda but became important in later times till we find in the Purāṇas that it becomes the northernmost region of Jambū Dwīpa, stretching out to the Arctic (Northern) ocean.

### *The Epics*

The subject matter of the Epics, i.e., the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, in some cases goes back to the remotest antiquity, but both of them in their existing forms are far later than any of the Vedic hymns, and probably posterior to all the Brāhmaṇas. The two Epics, are intimately related and include a large number of substantially identical verses (for instance, the present edition of the Rāmāyaṇa has copied from the Mahābhārata a whole chapter word for word; Canto 100 of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa is the same as Chapter 5 of the Sabhāparva). However, the original works of Vālmīki, that is to say, Books II-VI of the Rāmāyaṇa are believed to have been completed before the Epic kernel of the Mahābhārata had assumed a definite shape. We shall therefore consider the geographical ideas contained in the Rāmāyaṇa first.

The Rāmāyaṇa assumes that the entire earth belonged to the kings of the Solar race. In his reply to Vāli, Rāma says: 'The earth inclusive of even the hills and the forests belongs to the Ikṣvākus', but their sovereignty was evidently only a hegemony and not a unitary government. Very possibly it was hegemony only over some parts of India and adjacent lands, since Daśaratha explains this to Kaikeyī (in Ayodhyā, X, 381) and then proceeds to specify various kingdoms in India such as Sindhu, Sauvīra, Saurāṣṭra, Dakṣiṇāpatha, Vañga, Añga, Magadha, Matsya, Kāśī and Kosala. During the Aśwamedha sacrifice performed by Daśaratha, Vasiṣṭha asks Sumantra to bring all the righteous potentates in India (Bala, XIII, 18). He refers not only to the northern Indian kings of Mithilā, Kāśī, Kekaya and Aṅga, Sindhu, Sauvīra and Saurāṣṭra but also to some of the kings in South India. When Daśaratha calls an assembly of kings and commoners to consider the appointment of a *yuvarāja* (heir-apparent) he invites the kings of the east, north, west and south (Ayodhyā, III, 24). When Sugrīva sends four parties to search the four quarters for Sītā, we find in those descriptions a detailed delineation of the rivers of India from the Gaṅgā to the Tāmraparṇī and of various kingdoms in Northern as well as Southern India (Canto XLI of Kiṣkindha Kāṇḍa). There is a reference even to Kāvata which was the capital of the Pāṇḍya kingdom. In it we have also references to the lands beyond the Indian sub-continent, for instance, to Ceylon (Laṅkā), Jāvā (Yavadwīpa), Borneo (Suvarṇarūpyaka) as well as to China and Tibet (Chīna and Padma Chīna) and Bālhīka, etc. (Uttarakāṇḍa). These seem to be interpolations of a later period. More valuable details are found in the description of journeys to different parts of the country when Viśwāmitra took Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa from Ayodhyā (Oudh) to Siddhāśrama and then to Mithilā (North Bihar and Tirhut); the Epic gives a vivid account of the country traversed by them. The description of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

journey made by Vasiṣṭha's messengers who were sent to fetch Bharata and Śatrughna and that of the journey made by the latter from Girivraja in the Kekaya country (Punjab) to Ayodhyā reveal many interesting geographical features of the north-western regions of India. The narrative of Rāma's journey in exile from Ayodhyā to Citrakūṭa (60 miles south-west of Allahabad) and through the Daṇḍaka forest to Pampā, Kiṣkindhā and Laṅkā and finally the account of various countries of the four quarters of India where the 'vānara' chiefs were sent in sarch of Sītā (in Kiṣkindhā Khāṇḍa) bring out the geography of practically the whole of India and adjacent lands. Again, more facts about the South Indian kingdoms are revealed by the account of Rāvaṇa's car flying from Laṅkā to Mārīca's Āśrama. Thus a complete picture of a major part of South-Eastern Asia is presented by the Epic as conceived by Vālmīki.[4]

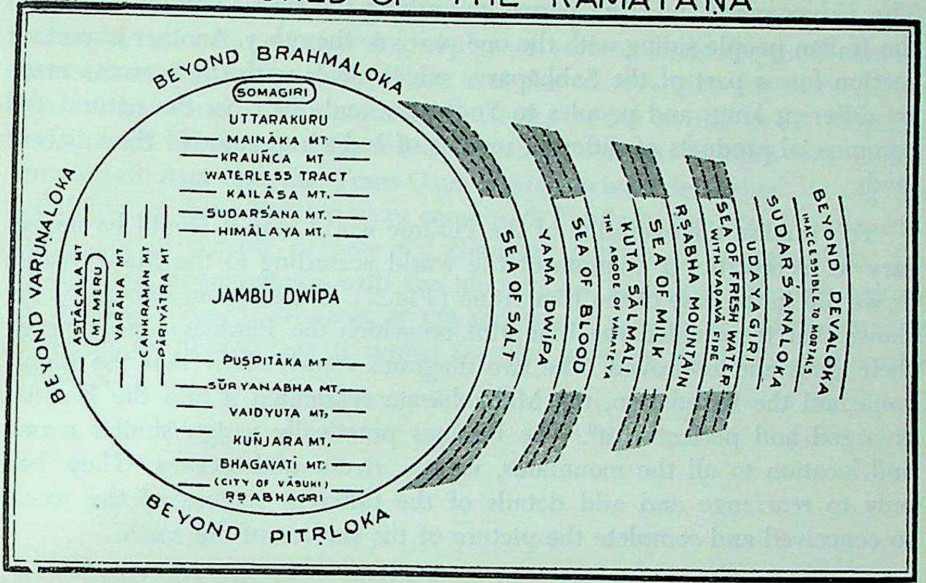
Although the major topographical features of North India as given in the Rāmāyaṇa are fairly accurately described, those which pertain to peninsular India are rather confused. It is stated that Rāma went into the Daṇḍaka forest and reached the Mahendra Mountain 'opposite Laṅkā', but the Mahendra Mountain is far away from the present Ceylon. The only possible explanation of these discrepancies appears to be that Vālmīki considered peninsular India to be bounded by the Vindhyas in the North, Sahya and Malaya (known as Western Ghats today) in the West and the Mahendra and Vindhyan ranges were supposed to be so interconnected that they could be considered as one range enclosing the Deccan Plateau on the North and East.

If we try to visualise the world of the Rāmāyaṇa with the help of the descriptions of mountains and rivers and their relative positions with reference to fixed or known points on the map of India and adjacent lands such as Kāśī, Ayodhyā, Himālaya, Gaṅgā, Citrakūṭa, etc. we come to the conclusion that the world of the Rāmāyaṇa covered the whole of South-Eastern Asia or at least a major part of it. An attempt has been made on the accompanying diagram (Fig. 1) to depict the major topographical features which are described or referred to directly or indirectly, in the Epic. The following points are to be noted because they have a direct bearing on the Purāṇic account of the seven dwīpas or continents.

1. The northern ocean is placed north of Uttarakuru, the 'Salt Ocean' is identified with the Bay of Bengal. The 'Milk Sea', the 'Sea of Blood' and the 'Fresh-Water Ocean' are located to the east of Bhārata.

2. Meru is placed to the West of Bhārata.

3. The Pāriyātra Mountain is linked with the Himālayas and as many as five mountains are located south of Jambū Dwīpa, and an equal number


THE WORLD OF THE RĀMĀYAṆA

BEYOND BRAHMALOKA
SOMAGIRI
UTTARAKURU
MAINĀKA MT
KRAUÑCA MT
WATERLESS TRACT
KAILĀSA MT.
SUDARŚANA MT.
HIMĀLAYA MT.
JAMBŪ DWĪPA
PUṢPITĀKA MT
SŪRYANABHA MT.
VAIDYUTA MT.
KUÑJARA MT.
BHAGAVATĪ MT.
(CITY OF VĀSUKI)
ṚṢABHAGIRI
BEYOND PITṚLOKA
BEYOND VARUṆALOKA
ASTĀCALA MT
MT MERU
VARĀHA MT
CAKRAMAN MT
PĀRIYĀTRA MT
SEA OF SALT
YAMA DWĪPA
SEA OF BLOOD
KUṬA ŚĀLMALI
THE ABODE OF VAINATEYA
SEA OF MILK
ṚṢABHA MOUNTAIN
SEA OF FRESH WATER WITH VADAVĀ FIRE
UDAYAGIRI
SUDARŚANALOKA
BEYOND DEVALOKA
INACCESSIBLE TO MORTALS

of them north of it. Again four important ranges are supposed to be west of Bhārata and two on the east.

4. Kūṭa Śālmali is located to the east of Bhārata.

The Mahābhārata, as we possess it in three recensions,[5] cannot be designated correctly as an epic poem. It is a gigantic mass of compositions by various authors on various dates extending over several centuries arranged in eighteen books or parvas with a supplement called the Harivaṁśa, which may be reckoned as the nineteenth book. The number of ślokas exceeds 100,000, while the Harivaṁśa contains over 16,000. It is virtually an encyclopædia of knowledge and moral teachings, and in its own words, contains 'the essence of the four Vedas'.

The geographical matter contained in the Mahābhārata is immense. It is perhaps the only great work which deals directly with geographical details, and not incidentally as other works. In the ninth chapter of the Bhīṣma Parva, Sañjaya gives a general description of India consisting of long lists of countries, 'nations', mountains and rivers. Again there are descriptions of certain routes which are valuable; for though the distance is hardly ever mentioned, the direction and reference to known places enable one to locate approximately the unknown. Besides, the Mahābhārata mentions in the Ādiparva the twelve years' sojourn of Arjuna, in the Sabhāparva the conquest of the 'four quarters' by the four brothers of Yudhiṣṭira; in the Vanaparva, an account of the Tīrthas and Pāṇḍava's pilgrimage and in the Aśvamedhaparva, Arjuna's expedition through various countries. The Udyogaparva and the parvas describing the war, mention almost all the Indian people siding with the one party or the other. Another important section forms part of the Sabhāparva which deals with the presents made by different kings and peoples to Yudhiṣṭira and describes the natural and commercial products of different regions of India and some of the adjacent lands.

To visualise the evolution of the Purāṇic world map it would be necessary to reconstruct a diagram of the world according to the Mahābhārata as we did in the case of the Rāmāyaṇa (Fig. 2). The diagram so constructed shows that it provided the blueprint on which the Purāṇas superimposed their ideas and improved. The two diagrams clearly show that the Rāmāyaṇa laid the foundation, the Mahābhārata reoriented it and the Purāṇas enlarged and perfected it[6]. The Purāṇas practically assign similar names and location to all the mountains, varṣas, rivers and oceans. They had only to rearrange and add details of the different regions of the world so conceived and complete the picture of the surface of the earth.

### *Astronomical Works*

As mentioned above, the astronomical notions of the Purāṇas are derived from those in the Vedic literature. Subsequently they were modified and enlarged in the light of advancement in astronomical and astrological science made by Indian astronomers. The works of Varāhmihira and Brahmagupta, Āryabhaṭṭa, Bhāskarācārya, Bhaṭṭila, Utpala, Vijayanandī, and others affected current ideas regarding the earth as a unit of the universe. The Purāṇas made a compromise between the scientific observations of the astronomers and the old traditions which had reached them through their sacred literature and wove them in their cosmological patterns. We find in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa chapters on the sun and its movement in the ecliptic, length of day and night, division of time, equinoxes and solstices, northern and southern declination, the planetary system, description of the moon and its movement, the polar star (Dhruva) and typical members of the planetary system. Other Purāṇas also follow the same pattern but add details here and there, which show clearly the impact of the growing knowledge of astronomy on religious thinking and the incorporation of new ideas which could be conveniently fitted into the ancient lore.

### *Travellers' Accounts*

Travellers' accounts, religious, commercial or expeditionary appear to have influenced the Purāṇic description of the different regions of the world. It is to be noted that all the Purāṇas, though basically identical as regards their geographical content, show variations in their regional accounts, according to their knowledge of various lands acquired through this source. For instance, the Vāyu and the Matsya give far more details about Bhadravarṣa and Ketumāla, i.e., extra-Indian territories as compared with others. Obviously these reflect the closer contacts of India with China, South-East Asia and the Trans-Oxus regions which developed during the period when these Purāṇas were composed. Similarly the later Purāṇas also bring out in varying degrees the changing pattern of communities (or tribes) and acquaintance with the topographic details of different regions of India and their inhabitants by the addition or substraction of names to or from the traditional lists of similar features given in the Epics and earlier Purāṇas.

# CHAPTER II Puranic Continents and Oceans

THE geography of the world and its regions figures in most of the Purāṇas, the main features of the continents and oceans and their subdivisions remaining essentially the same. The Agni and Brahma are word for word the same as the Viṣṇu; and the Kūrma, Liṅga, Matsya, Mārkaṇḍeya and Vāyu present many passages common to them and the Viṣṇu or to one another. The Vāyu enters most fully into particulars. The Bhāgavata differs in its nomenclature of minor details from all, and is followed by the Padma. The others either omit the subject, or refer to it briefly. The Mahābhārata (Bhīṣma Parva) gives an account which is essentially the same, and many of the stanzas are common to it and the different Purāṇas.

According to the Purāṇas (except the Padma), the world comprises of seven 'dwīpas.' A 'dwīpa' literally means 'land between two arms of water'. It may signify and 'island', a 'peninsula' or a 'doab' (between two rivers). In ancient Sanskrit literature it has often been used to mean only a division of land (big or small) and no more. These seven dwīpas are so arranged that the central one (called the Jambū Dwīpa) is surrounded by an ocean of salt water. Round this ocean is land again which forms the second dwīpa. This dwīpa in its turn is encompassed by the ocean of sugarcane-juice and so on. Thus there are seven dwipas or Lands and seven seas (or oceans). The areas of each continent and ocean are such that they increase in simple geometrical progression according to their distance from the central dwīpa.

The order in which the dwīpas occur is not uniform in all the Purāṇas. The sequence given in different Purāṇas is summarised in the following table (see pp. 28-9).

All the Purāṇas are agreed at least on one particular point, i.e., the place assigned to Jambū Dwīpa. All, except the Skanda, further agree in designating Puṣkara as the seventh dwīpa and also maintain that the first ocean is briny, while the last one contains fresh water. It may, however, be noted that the Mahābhārata and the Padma Purāṇa enumerate only five dwīpas which signifies the Plakṣa and Śālmala may be later additions to the list of dwīpas.

Each dwīpa is named after a founder who is one of the sons of Prajāvrats. Each of them founds a kingdom or dynasty in his dwīpa. With one exception, each of these heroes begets seven sons and the kingdom of his dwīpa is divided into seven principalities, one principality being assigned to each of the seven sons. Again each dwīpa has seven mountain ranges and seven rivers.

The names of the principalities or sub-regions in each dwīpa are derived in most of the Purāṇas from the names of the founders' sons. In some Purāṇas some of the dwīpas themselves and of the sub-regions are named after the mountain ranges.

With one or two exceptions, the element of caste appears in these dwīpas. The castes are invariably four, corresponding to the four castes obtaining in India, though they are known by other names and are distinctive in the several dwīpas.

As we shall presently see the dwīpas differ in details in different Purāṇas. The name of each of the dwīpas is identical with the name of a colossal tree or plant growing in that dwīpa. Only Krauñcha Dwīpa gets its name from the local mountain bearing that name.

The idea of seven continents, seven *iqlims* (climates), seven keśwars (empires), seven seas, seven lands and seven skies is quite old, but it appears for the first time in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata.[1]

Before we trace the evolution of the Purāṇic cosmography it would be interesting to see how similar notions prevailed among the other nations of the world, particularly among the Arabs, the Persians, the Greeks and the Chinese. The Arabs borrowed from the Greeks the division of the habitable world into seven climates. This division is based on the relative length of days and nights. Ptolemy counted, in his 'Geography', twenty climates[2]; but some more ancient authors had recognized seven climates[3], and it was the latter which the Arabs adopted. The seven climates included all the portion of the globe to which the ancients and the Arabs gave the name of the 'habitable quarter' of the world. The Arabs and the ancients, however, were agreed that there existed habitable earths even beyond the seven climates[4].

The Arabs understood by the word 'climate' a terrestrial zone parallel to the equator, where the difference between the length of the day and the night at summer solstice amounted to half an hour. But there was no agreement regarding the point of commencement and ultimate boundary of the seven climates. Abul Fida considered the first climate to commence at the 12th degree N. lat. and the last climate extended to the 50th degree.[5]

| *Continents & oceans* | *Bhāgawata, Garuḍa, Vāmana, Brahma, Mārkaṇḍeya, Liṅga, Kūrma, Brahmāṇḍa, Agni, Vāyu, Devi & Viṣṇu* | *Matsya* | *Varāha* | *Skanda* | *Mahābhārata & Padma* | *Siddhānta Śiromaṇi* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
| 1 | Jambū | Jambū | Jambū | Jambū | Jambū | Jambū |
| 1a | Salt water (Lavana) | Salt water | Salt water | Salt water | — | — |
| 2 | Plakṣa | Śaka | Śaka | Śaka | Śaka | Śaka |
| 2a | Sugarcane Juice (Ikṣu) | Milk | Milk | Milk | — | — |
| 3 | Śālmala (i) | Kuśa | Kuśa | Puṣkara | Kuśa | Śālmala |
| 3a | Wine (Surā) | Ghee | Curd | Wine | — | — |
| 4 | Kuśa | Krauñca | Krauñca | Kuśa | Krauñca | Kuśa |

| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4a | Ghee (Sarpi) | Curd | Ghee | Curd | — | — |
| 5 | Krauñca | Śālmala | Śālmala | Krauñca | Puṣkara | Krauñca |
| 5a | Curd (Dadhi) | Wine | Wine | Ghee | — | — |
| 6 | Śaka | Gomeda (ka) | Gomeda | Śālmali | — | Gomeda (ka) |
| 6a | Milk (Kṣīr) | Sugarcane | Sugarcane | Sugarcane juice | — | — |
| 7 | Puṣkara | Puṣkara | Puṣkara | Gomeda | — | — |
| 7a | Fresh water (Swaduda) | Fresh water | Fresh water | Fresh water | — | — |

a = Surrounded by an ocean of:

Romaka Siddhānta names Jambū, Kuśa Candra, Śālmala, Plakṣa, Gomeda and Puṣkara (i.e., Candra and Gomeda for Krauñca and Śaka).

Yogavāsiṣṭha 3.73.52-8 gives: Jambū, Śaka, Kuśa, Śveta, Krauñca, Gomeda and Puṣkara.

The idea of climatic divisions was initiated by the Greeks. The word 'climate' itself indicates it, having been derived from a Greek term 'klima' meaning 'inclination'. In fact the idea of climates was based more or less on the inclination of the sun in relation to the equator. The idea of climate was adopted by the Persians in the early centuries of the Christian era, when Greek ideas invaded the East. Probably it was the same with Indians. Among the Persians, and later among the Arabs, the word 'climate' was written 'iqlim'.

But beyond its acceptance in astronomy, the word 'climate' received among the Persians (and later among other nations), the signification of empire and nation. We know that like the Indians the Persians believed in the existence of seven earths separated from one another by seas and that while the Indians gave the name of Jambū Dwīpa to the inhabited earth, the Persians called it 'Khonneretz-Bami'. The Khonneretz, according to the Persians included Iran-Verj, Kang-dez, Jamgard and Kashmir.[6] The Persians, later divided the world into seven empires or rather seven nations which they sometimes called by the indigenous name of kishwars and at other times by the name of 'climates'. These seven empires, as mentioned in the *Zend Avestā,* are: the Tazi or Arabs, Irān or Persia, Mazendran or the Slav races, Turān or the land of Turks, Rum or Roman Empire, Sind and India and lastly Chinistan or China.[7] In the *Chahnāmā,* the seven kishwars are—China, India, Turān or Turkistan, the Roman Empire, Africa, the land of the Slavs and Irān. We find the name of the Romans included in this scheme, which leaves no room for doubt that this division was not made earlier than the Christian era. As regards the word Irān and Turān, it is known that these are the two denominations which have been employed by the Persians since remote antiquity, the first indicating Perisa and the second indicating in a general manner the nations established at that time north of the Oxus.

The Chinese, according to Abū Zaid divided the world into five major political divisions.[8] The Emperor of China, he says, told him, 'We count five great sovereigns. The richest of them reigns over Iraq (the province of Baghdad), because Iraq is situated in the centre of the world and other kings are placed round him. He bears the title of "the King of Kings". After this Empire comes ours; the sovereign is named "the King of Peoples" because no other king on the earth maintains better order in his states, and rules; there are hardly any people who are more loyal to their prince than are our people. He is, therefore, in reality "the King of People". After that comes the "King of Ferocious Beasts", viz. the King of the Turks with his state adjacent to China. The fourth in rank is the "King of Elephants", namely, the King of India. We call him the "King of Wisdom" because wisdom is the special characteristic of the Indians. Lastly comes the "Emperor of the Romans" whom we call the "King of Beautiful People", not because they are beautiful but because no other people excel the Romans in physique. These are the principal kings, others occupy only a secondary position.' The title of the 'King of People' which the Emperor of China adopted apparently meant 'the King of Humanity in general'. The title of the 'King of Ferocious Beasts' belongs, specifically to the ruler of the Turks, called by contemporary writers by the name of Tagazgaz. According to Masūdī, no other people on earth were more brutal, more given to shedding blood, or rearing of horses, than the Turks.[9]

Another Chinese tradition which goes back to the period of the firm establishment of Buddhism there is 'East of the Tsing-Ling mountain is the "King of People" (Emperor of China) who bears this title on account of the enormous population of this part of the world. These people have refined manners. Humanity, justice and science flourish there and the land is sweet and pleasant. South of China lies the empire of the "King of Elephants" (or the King of India). This country is hot and humid. It suits the elephants, hence its name. The inhabitants are ferocious and violent, they are devoted to magic and occult sciences, but they also believe in purifying their hearts, and in escaping from the vicissitudes of life and death by sundering worldly ties. On the west is the empire of the "King of Precious Commodities" (the King of Persia, known later by the title of the Caliph of Baghdad). This land touches the sea which produces pearls and precious objects, and which give it its name. The inhabitants do not practise any rites (Buddhist) nor do they have any social laws. They only have an inordinate love for riches. To the north lies the empire of the "King of Horses". The land is cold and hard and is suitable for raising horses. The inhabitants are brave and cruel. They know how to endure death and face danger'.[10] It is to be noted that by Tsing-Ling mountains, the Chinese usually meant the Pāmīr Plateau and its ranges. It coincides with the Meru of the Purāṇas.[11]

Let us now consider how the idea of the seven dwīpas originated and developed in Purāṇic cosmography. The source of all Purāṇic notions, as mentioned earlier can be traced back to the Vedic literature and the Epics, in the present case to the Epics. We shall therefore first of all discuss in detail the regional division of the world which can be deduced from various statements made in the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa and compare them with corresponding concepts in the Buddhist and the Jain literature. At the same time we shall endeavour to examine in relation to the source material the varying and sometimes conflicting details of the various dwīpas as given in different Purāṇas.

The most ancient concept of the earth[12] was that of four dwīpas or regions, i.e., Jambū, Uttarakuru, Ketumāla and Bhadrāśwa[13] partially surrounded by four seas.[14] These four countries were grouped around Meru (south, north, west and east respectively) like the petals of a lotus.

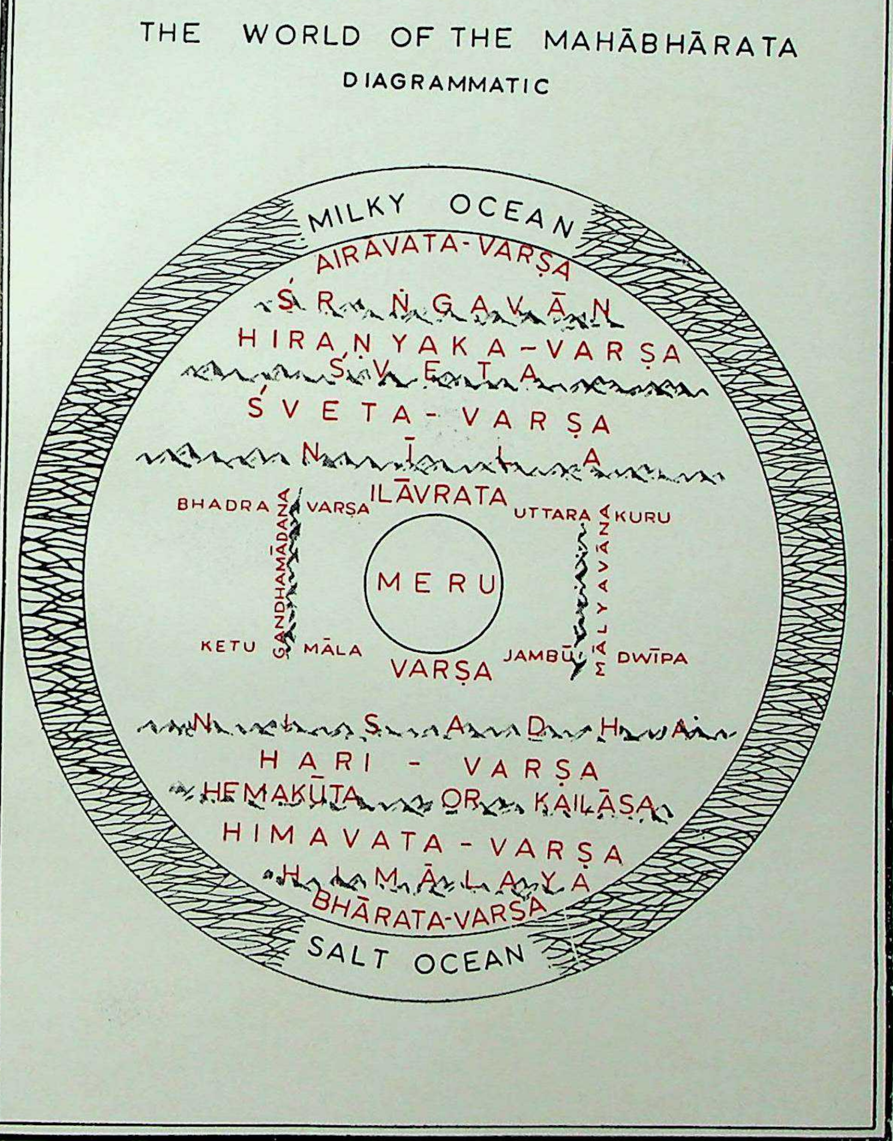
Similarly the Harivaṁśa[15] names Uttarakuru, Bhadrāśwa, Ketumāla and Jambū Dwīpa. In two of the passages, the region of Yama is substituted for the southern Jambū Dwīpa. Although seven dwīpas and seven seas are mentioned[16] in several passages, there is no mention anywhere of a single Purāṇic dwīpa, whereas the names of the four dwīpas are given.

The Mahābhārata (12, 14, 21-5) presents a different account. It is stated there that 'Yudhiṣṭira formerly ruled Jambū Dwīpa; Krauñca Dwīpa like Jambū Dwīpa and situated west of Meru; Śaka Dwīpa like Krauñca Dwīpa and situated east of Meru; and Bhadrāśwa equal in size to Śaka Dwīpa and situated north of Meru'.

The above observations are corroborated by the earliest Buddhist cosmology[17] where the original concept has been overlaid by Purāṇic ideas but the theory of concentric dwīpas is clearly secondary. Especially noteworthy are the passages in the Mahāvastu and the Lalitavistāra which mention only the four dwīpas—Jambū Dwīpa, Pūrvavideha, Aparagodānīya and Uttarakuru (grouped around Meru to the south, east, west and north respectively)—and constituting the whole world, 'Lokadhātu' and give no hint of the Purāṇic geography. They most probably represent an older period than does the Mahābhārata (6, 5-12) in its present form. The general idea is the same, the particular names vary.

It is noteworthy that geography of the Sūrya-Siddhānta (12. 38-40)[18] is based entirely on this earlier concept. The Jain texts in general seem to be closer to the Purāṇic concept than are the Buddhist texts, but the oldest texts need further investigation in this respect. Some texts give eight or nine, others as many as nineteen dwīpas. The names and the order of such elements as agree with the Purāṇic elements differ considerably from the names and order of the Purāṇic tradition which is itself not always consistent, but many elements are common to both the traditions. There are, however, traces of traditions intermediate between the theory of four dwīpas as outlined above and the Purāṇic theory of several concentric dwīpas. Weber [19] describes a theory of two concentric oceans and three (or two and half) dwīpas. In the centre is the Jambū Dwīpa, divided by six parallel mountain ranges into seven regions. The mountains from south to north are named Himavat, Mahāhimavat, Niṣadha, Nīlavata, Rūpya and Śikharin, Harivarṣa, Videhaka, Ramyaka, Airaṇyavata and Airavata.[20] Surrounding Jambū Dwīpa is the salt water ocean. Then comes Dhāta-

Fig. 2


THE WORLD OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA
DIAGRAMMATIC
MILKY OCEAN
AIRAVATA-VARṢA
ŚṚṄGAVĀN
HIRAṆYAKA-VARṢA
ŚVETA
ŚVETA-VARṢA
NĪLA
BHADRA VARṢA
ILĀVRATA
UTTARA KURU
GANDHAMĀDANA
MĀLYAVĀNA
MERU
KETU MĀLA
VARṢA
JAMBŪ DWĪPA
NIṢADHA
HARI-VARṢA
HEMAKŪṬA OR KAILĀSA
HIMAVATA-VARṢA
HIMĀLAYA
BHĀRATA-VARṢA
SALT OCEAN

kīkhaṇḍa (or Dhātukīkhaṇḍa) surrounded by an ocean of fresh water. Then comes Puṣkaradwīpa, the outer half of which is shut off by the Maṇīsottara mountains which cause perpetual darkness there. The outer half of Puṣkaradwīpa is named Mahāvīra. The earliest Jaina cosmography deserves a closer study and comparison with early Buddhist and Hindu cosmography.

In its description of Sudarśana[21] (evidently equivalent to Jambū Dwīpa) the Kumbhakonam edition of the Mahābhārata (6.5.17) used the words: *'Dviramasas tu tatah Plakṣa dvitṛmśah Śālmalir mahaṁ, dviramsah Pippalastasya dviramsas ca Kuśo mahaṁ.'* The Bombay and Calcutta editions omit the first line and read: *'Dviramse Pippalas tatra dviramse ca Śaśa mahaṁ.'* In 6.6.2 all three editions read Pippala and Śaśa. In 6.6.13 all three editions have Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Jambū Dwīpa and Uttarakuru. Noteworthy is the intrusion of Plakṣa in the Kumbhakonam edition, which is mentioned nowhere else in the Epic except in this passage of the Kumbhakonam edition. The context does not support the Kumbhakonam reading, but these particular names would hardly have been used, even in a late interpolation after they had become crystallised as the names of concentric dwīpas. They are named here as parts of Jambū Dwīpa, not as independent dwīpas. If the line is an interpolation, it seems to come from a period earlier than that of the Purāṇic geography.

Intermediate between the simple conception of the four dwīpas grouped around Meru and the Purāṇic theory of seven dwīpas surrounded by and surrounding seven concentric oceans (Jambū, Plakṣa, Śālmali, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka ad Puṣkara surrounded respectively by the oceans of salt water, sugarcane juice, wine, clarified butter, milk, curd and fresh water) is the description of Mahābhārata 6, 11-12. In 6, 11, 1-3 after a description of Jambū Dwīpa has been given, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks Sañjaya for a description of Śāka, Kuśa, Śālmali and Krauñca. In 6.11.4 is the statement: 'O King! this world is composed of very many dwīpas, but I shall describe to you only seven dwīpas and also the Sun and the Moon and the planets'.[22] After a brief description of Jambū Dwīpa comes a description of Śakadwīpa which is surrounded on all sides by the sea of milk (6.11.10), but no statement is made concerning its direction from Jambū Dwīpa. Then in 6.12.1 occurs the statement, *'Uttareśu ca Kauravya, dvīpeśu śrūyate Kathā, evaṁ tatra mahārāja bruvataś ca nibodha me'*. After this, oceans of clarified butter, curd, wine and water and the dwīpas, Kuśa, Śālmali and Krauñca are enumerated. In verse 24 is the statement: 'In Puṣkara dwīpa there is a mountain called Puṣkara full of gems and jewels' and in verse 26 it is stated that various gems come there from Jambū Dwīpa. No specific ocean is mentioned in connection with it and there is no explicit statement to the effect that it is situated in the north. But in verse 3 it is said that the dwīpas double in size as one goes north and that they are surrounded by these oceans. That seemingly makes it necessary to include Puṣkara among the northern dwīpas and to connect it with the ocean of fresh water, yet in verse 9 it is said that in 'the middle dwīpa' (that rules out Puṣkara the fourth)[23] is a large mountain named Gaura and that in the Paścima dwīpa is a large mountain named Kṛṣṇa[24] which is a favourite abode of Nārāyaṇa. Paścima usually means 'western' which seems out of place here. Yet Kṛṣṇa is not included in the six mountains of Krauñcadwīpa, nor is it mentioned in the description of Puṣkaradwīpa. The dilemma is one from which there is no escape on the basis of our uncritical editions of the Mahābhārata. The matter is further complicated by the fact that in the request for information only Śākadwīpa, Kuśadwīpa, Śālmalidwīpa and Krauñca-dwīpa are named. After including Jambū these make five. In 6.11.4 a description of seven dwīpas was promised, but only six are actually described. A description of Puṣkaradwīpa, not asked for, is given and in both request and answer Plakṣadwīpa is omitted. Surely the number seven is not to be taken literally. The description of Śākadwīpa is so clearly marked off from that of the dwīpas which are said to be situated in the north that there is no valid reason for believing that it too was located in the north. More details are given about it than about the other dwīpas. The names of the four castes living there are given. This detail is extended by the Purāṇas to the other dwīpas also. Its seven mountains including Meru seem to be modelled on the seven Kulaparvatas of Jambū Dwīpa. It is assigned second place and seems to be more historical than the other dwīpas.

Significant is the fact that while the Mahābhārata states that the dwīpas are surrounded by oceans, nowhere is it stated that the dwīpas surround the oceans. The Mahābhārata does not show any knowledge of the theory of concentric circles of land. Its dwīpas are really islands or doabs. The Purāṇic theory may be due merely to a misunderstanding of this passage of the Mahābhārata, or distant islands and peninsulas such as Indo-China, Jāvā, Sumātrā and Arabia may have been regarded as forming circles of land.

In the Purāṇic accounts Śākadwīpa is usually placed sixth in order, but there is a different theory which places it second in order, and this latter tradition seems to be the earlier one. In the passage just quoted from the Mahābhārata Śākadwīpa is assigned second place and more details are given about it than about the other dwīpas.

If the Śākadwīpa of Mahābhārata (6.11) is not to be located in the north there are many clues as to its probable location. The Mahābhārata

(12, 14, 23, quoted above) unequivocally locates Śākadwīpa east of Meru. A passage in the Bhāskara (quoted by Wilson in Viṣṇu Purāṇa, 2.110.1) says:

> Venerable teachers have stated that Jambū Dwīpa embraces the whole northern hemisphere lying to the north of the Salt Sea and that the other six dwīpas and the (seven) seas,' viz., those of Salt, Milk, etc. are all situated in the southern hemisphere. To the south of the equator lies the Salt Sea, and to the north of it, the Sea of Milk whence sprang the nectar, the moon and the (goddess) Śrī and where the omnipresent Vāsudeva, to whose lotus feet Brahmā and all the gods bow in reverence, has his favourite residence. Beyond the Sea of Milk lie, in succession, the seas of curd, clarified butter, sugarcane juice and wine, and, last of all, that of sweet water which surrounds Vaḍavānala.

Even more significant is the passage in the Rāmāyaṇa (4.40) which contains a long description of the journey made by the monkeys eastward (verses 19.54) in search of Sītā. It said there that the searchers, after leaving India, will first come to Yavadwīpa (probably Jāvā), Saptarajyopaśobhitaṁ and Suvarṇarūpyakadvīpāni, Suvarṇakaramanditam,[25] then to a mountain named Śiśira,[26] then to a river (Soṇa) then to an ocean (Kalameghapratimaṁ), then to an ocean (Raktajalaṁ Lohitaṁ)[27] where there is Kuṣṭaśālmali, then to the Pāṇḍurameghābhaṁ Kṣīrodaṁ, in the midst of which is a mountain (*mahāna śveta Ṛsabho nāma parvatah*) containing the Sudarśana lake, then to the Jalodama which contains the Hayamukha (whirlpool). On the northern shore of this ocean is a mountain (*Jalarūpaśilo nāma Sumahān kanakaprabhah*) and beyond this to the east, the Udayagiri, one peak of which is named Saumanasa. In Gorresio's edition which differs considerably from the above account, the stages of the journey are marked by the following names: Jaladwīpa, Gaṇadwīpa, Jambūdwīpa, Śiśira, Kālodaka, Lohita (with the Kūṭaśālmali) Mt. Gośṛnga, Kṣīroda (with Mt. Añśumat and Lake Sudarśana), Ghṛtoda, Jalarūpaśilā, Udayagiri and Saumanasa. The first three names are puzzling. The ocean (Kālameghapratimaṁ or Kāloda) is comparable to the Kāloda, which, in some Jain accounts, surrounds the second dwīpa Dhātaki. Lohita is comparable to the red ocean of wine (Surā) which surrounds Śālmalidwīpa; the mention of the Kūṭaśālmali makes the identification certain. Kṣīroda corresponds to the ocean of milk which surrounds Śākadwīpa[28]. The Ghṛtoda can be identified with the Ghṛtoda which surrounds Kuśadwīpa. Jaloda corresponds to the ocean of fresh water which surrounds Puṣkaradwīpa, while Hayamukha is identical with the Vaḍavāmukha or Vaḍavānala of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas.[29] The passage seems to be old, older even than the geographical passage in the Mahābhārata (6). It probably reflects travellers' accounts of voyages to the east. It is to be noted also that Rāmāyaṇa 4.42.38 for obvious reasons locates Meru in the west, not in the north.

Jātaka No. 463, contains a description of a voyage made by a ship from Bharukaccha. After a favourable voyage lasting seven days it was swept away by a storm. At the end of four months it reached the Khuramāla Sea (so called because it was full of great fish which stuck their sharp razor-like snouts above the water); then it passed through the seas named Agnimāla[30] (blazing like fire), Dahimāla (the colour of curds), Nīlavaṇṇa-Kuśamāla or Kuśamāla (the colour of kuśā grass), Nalamāla (red like coral),[31] and came to the Valabhamukha.[32] Dadhimāla corresponds to the Purāṇic ocean of curds. Kuśamāla is the same as the Purāṇic Kuśadwīpa, Nalamāla is identical with the Purāṇic red ocean of wine. Valabhamukha is the same as the Hayamukha of the Rāmāyaṇa. This Jātaka also is evidently based on travellers' narratives and contains early elements. This is much more probable than the opposite conclusion, namely, that we have here reminiscences of the Purāṇic descriptions made still more mythical. The direction of the voyage is not given, but if the comparison with the account in the Rāmāyaṇa has any validity it may well have been to the east.

The Mahābhārata (6.6.55) describes Kāśyapadwīpa and Nāgadwīpa as forming the two ears of Sasa—the 'hare' (a portion of Jambū Dwīpa), situated in the north and south respectively.[33] The Kumbhakonam edition reads Śākadwīpa for Nāgadwīpa. The fact that in the Purāṇas Nāgadwīpa is regularly described as one of the nine varṣas of Bhāratvarṣa militates against the text of the Kumbhakonam edition, even so Śākadwīpa would hardly have been inserted in the southern text if it had been regarded as one of the concentric dwīpas. Kāśyapadwīpa does not seem to occur in the Purāṇic tradition.

From the above discussion it would appear that there is considerable confusion regarding the number, location and contents of various dwīpas in our ancient literature. This confusion has created difficulties in their identification and classification. However, there are a few basic facts which emerge from the preceding paragraphs and which could serve as a background for the study and recognition of Purāṇic dwīpas as regional units on the surface of the earth. These facts are as follows:

(i) The word 'dwīpa' originally signified a land bounded by water (ocean, sea, river or lake or by a combination of these) on all or three or two sides. Thus it was equally applied to an island, a peninsula or a 'doab'.[34] The Arabs extended the corresponding word 'jezira' to a land surrounded by water bodies or sand wastes, which made that land inaccessible from almost all sides. Thus their 'jezira' could signify a land surrounded by a desert (an oasis), a land surrounded by water on one side and desert on the other (Algeria), a land between two rivers (Mesopotamia), etc. The Purāṇas appear to have further extended the meaning of the term 'dwīpa' to include 'any land which was ordinarily inaccessible or detached by virtue of its being surrounded by water, sand, swamp or even high mountains or thick forests'. Thus the Purāṇic 'dwīpa', by accident or design, came to signify a natural region—either physiographic or climatic. It will be realised presently that if we accept this broad definition of a 'dwīpa', practically all the Purāṇic dwīpas satisfy these conditions to a very large extent.

(ii) The term 'dwīpa' (and its counterpart among other nations of the world) was subsequently applied to and associated with kingdoms, empires, provinces and even districts, and a 'dwīpa' instead of signifying only a natural region as envisaged in para (i) above included a 'human' region, i.e., the territory of a nation or a human group. Thus, although the number 'seven' persisted in the geographical literature of the world, the word 'dwīpa' was used for all types of natural or human regions—big or small. Thus 'dwīpas', wherever they were used in the latter sense, were subject to expansion, contraction or extinction as 'human regions' usually do. Consequently the discrepancies regarding their location or existence in different Purāṇas may have their roots in history.

(iii) When the Purāṇas describe the world, they mean the 'inhabitable or inhabited world'. Their 'world' is identical with the 'Ruba-al-Mamūr' ('inhabitable quarter of the world') of the Arabs. It is almost certain that uninhabited, desert or desolate lands did not find a place in their scheme of the regional division of the world—i.e.. in their 'seven dwīpas'. In other words if we want to locate their 'dwīpas' on the modern map, we should at once ignore or 'subtract' the negative areas from the world map altogether.

(iv) Oceans or seas of milk, curd, clarified butter, sugarcane juice or wine should not be taken too literally. Oceanic waters differ in colour, salinity, density, turbulence, percentage and colour of silt, bottom deposits or organic growth (e.g., corals). They give some superficial character to the water bodies which are often named after them. The White Sea, the Black Sea, the Red Sea, the Yellow Sea, the Green Sea ('Behr-i-Arzaq' of the Arabs), the Blue Nile and White Nile, etc. do not signify the actual colour of the water but indicate a characteristic caused by the presence of impurities or other features of their surface or bottom or their contents.

(v) When dealing with ancient geography, particularly when traditions go back to a period thousands of years before the Christian era, it is necessary to visualise the climate, vegetation, topographic details and population distribution which existed in those times and which have been changing since then. Changes in climate, river courses, their water content and the nature of their sediments, the filling up of depressions, changes in the level of the land or the sea, deposition of sand over large areas and erosion of minor relief features effect the vegetation cover and have to be taken into account before one attempts to reconstruct the world map of the ancients. Human groups and their distribution react and respond quickly to these changes and the 'human' regions (or dwīpas) with which the Purāṇas are chiefly concerned are bound to change in size and importance.

Various 'theories' have been propounded regarding the identity of the Seven Dwīpas of the Purāṇas, which can be classified on the basis of their identification. They fall under the following categories:

(1) That the Seven Dwīpas are nothing but fanciful fables.[35] This view is untenable, since, in spite of obvious discrepancies which may have been introduced into the Purāṇic texts by various factors including the poetic element dominating geographical descriptions, there appears an element of truth and reality in the case of many of the dwīpas which leads one to believe in the existence of others as well.

(2) That the Seven Dwīpas are nothing but seven stellar planes[36], i.e. imaginary spheres round the earth in which dwell beings which are different from those which live on the earth. This may be acceptable to some, but this is exactly what the Purāṇas never intended to convey. If that was intended they would not have hesitated to add a few more stellar planes to those which have been specifically mentioned, viz. the Mahar-Loka, Tapa-Loka and Satya-Loka. Besides, the Purāṇas associate the dwīpas with real mountains and rivers and divide them into 'Varṣas'.

(3) That the Seven Dwīpas represent the successive changes in the earth's crust during different geological periods. This view is obviously farfetched since the whole of the Purāṇic world and animals and man, pertain to the most recent or current geological period of earth's history and have no relation with the past geological periods in the accepted sense of the word.

(4) That the Seven Dwīpas correspond to:

(a) Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia, North and South Americas and Antarctica.

(b) The 'Seven Climates' of the ancients.

(c) Various lands in the old world:

i. Jambū (India); Plakṣa (Arakan and Burma); Kuśa (Sunda Archipelago); Śālmali (Malaya Peninsula); Krauñca (South India), Śaka (Kamboja) and Puṣkara (N. China and Mongolia).[37]

ii. Jambū (India); Kuśa (Iran); Plakṣa (Asia Minor); Śālmali (Central Europe); Krauñca (Western Europe); Śaka (British Isles) and Puṣkara (Iceland).[38]

iii. Jambū (India); Krauñca (Asia Minor); Gomeda (Komedie, Tartary); Puṣkara (Turkistan); Śaka (Scythia); Kuśa (Iran, Arabia and Ethiopia); Plakṣa (Greece); Śālmali (Sarmatia?)[39]

The fundamental error which these scholars made was that they tried to identify the Purāṇic dwīpas by their mountains and rivers which are enumerated in the Purāṇas. This approach is far from satisfactory. One can place and name any seven rivers in a major region of the world and distort their names according to convenience to suit one's arguments. Purāṇic description (or enumeration) of rivers and mountains in a dwīpa can be applied to any region and is therefore misleading. There are other basic natural factors such as climate and vegetation which give personality to a region and regions can be identified with a fair degree of certainity if we know their climate and vegetation. It is particularly so when we equate a 'dwīpa' with a 'human region' which derives its identity from human groups on the surface of the earth. It has already been pointed out that human grouping or population distribution is intimately connected with, and profoundly affected by, climate and vegetation cover. Let us apply these principles to the Purāṇic dwīpas.

If we read the Purāṇic description of Śākadwīpa, keeping the climatic and vegetational data foremost, we learn that:

1. In Śākadwīpa, besides the traditional seven sacred rivers, 'there are hundreds and thousands of minor streams'; implying that this dwīpa is a region of abundant rainfall.

2. Śāka or teak is the distinctive tree of this dwīpa which, considering the climatic requirement of teak must be situated within the 'Monsoon Belt'.

3. Viṣṇu is devoutly worshipped there as the Sun, which points to its being an eastern region.

Let us, therefore, find a region of very heavy rainfall, thickly forested, abundant in teak and situated to the east of Jambū Dwīpa. Śākadwīpa will consequently be that part of Monsoon Asia which satisfies these conditions.

The monsoon lands of Asia where teak is found include Burma, Malaya, Siam and Indo-China. Of these, Burma and Malaya traditionally formed units of the adjacent Peninsulas and Islands of Bhāratavarṣa.[40] Śākadwīpa, therefore, can be identified with Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Southern China or the South-Eastern corner of the land mass of which Jambū Dwīpa occupied the centre. The turbulent and foamy sea known as the Southern China Sea which surrounds this dwīpa on three sides was called 'The Sea of Milk,' or 'Kṣīra Samudra' as conceived by the Purāṇas. It is to be noted that in the Matsya, Varāha, Padma and Skanda Purāṇas as well as in the Mahābhārata and the Siddhānta Śiromaṇi, Śākadwīpa appears next to the Jambū Dwīpa and one could approach it by crossing the 'Kṣīra Samudra or the Bay of Bengal. This identification is supported by the following facts:

(a) Śākadwīpa was, according to early traditions, east of Meru as evidenced in Mahābhārata (12, 14, 21-5) and Rāmāyaṇa (quoted above).

(b) It is usually placed sixth in order of enumeration in the majority of the Purāṇas (see Table above), but some Purāṇas and other authorities place it as second. The later tradition seems to be the earlier one. It appears that in the former case the enumeration of dwīpas starts from south-west of Jambū towards the north through west and then again from south-east to north-east. In the latter case the enumeration starts from the southeast of Jambū Dwīpa to its south-west then to the west, then to the north, and finally to the east. In either case the position of the Śākadwīpa remains in the southeast of Jambū Dwīpa and that of Puṣkara to the east of Jambū Dwīpa.

### *Kuśadwīpa*

The following features of Kuśadwīpa are described in the Purāṇas (Matsya, 45-77):

(1) The characteristic natural vegetation of the dwīpa is 'kuśa' or poa grass. In addition to 'flowers and fruits, various varieties of trees, cereals and mineral wealth are plentiful there; and the trees are always laden with flowers and fruits. . . .'

(2) It contains seven major rivers and 'thousands of their branches that run *when Indra pours down rain*'. In other words in this dwīpa the rivers are non-perennial, i.e., they flow during the rainy season only.

(3) It contains mountains covered with herbs, trees and creepers (*not snow-covered and bare*), a mountain of yellow orpiment (*unnata*) and a volcanic mountain (*Mahiṣa-Agni*) rising out of the sea. Another mountain

is 'Kakudmāna' also known as the Mandara. It is full of all kinds of minerals and precious stones, and is guarded by Indra himself. The word 'manda' means water and since it scatters water it is called Mandara, in the company of Brahmā for the good of the people. The description of the last mountain suggests a higher mountain with abundant rainfall as compared with others and from which water is carried by rivers to other parts of the dwīpa which are less rainy or comparatively dry. Its association with Indra also suggests a long dry season.

(4) The dwīpa surrounds the 'ocean of milk' and is surrounded by the 'ocean of curd' or the 'ocean of ghee' (*Gharita*) (Vāyu).

(5) The presiding deity of the dwīpa is Agni (Fire-God) (Bhāgawata).

The overall picture of the Kuśadwīpa as painted by the Purāṇic literature suggests a 'grassland', i.e., a region of seasonal drought. There are two such belts (i.e., grassland belts) in the old world—the tropical grasslands, i.e., the Savannahs and the temperate grasslands, the steppes. The Purāṇas in all probability refer to the former and not to the latter since starting from the equator it is the 2nd climatic belt towards the Poles. The reference to Agni is rather pointed and brings out the association of this region with the fire-worshippers of Iran and South-Western Asia. Kuśadwīpa therefore included Iran, Iraq and the fringing lands of the hot desert, i.e., the south-western corner of the land mass round Meru which is left out in the regional pattern of Jambū Dwīpa. Incidentally, this region also coincides with the land of Kuśa of the scripture which added Ethiopia to the Purāṇic dwīpa mentioned above.

### *Plakṣadwīpa*

In the majority of Purāṇas it is a dwīpa next to Jambū. In some it is omitted and its place is taken by Gomeda (Skanda, Matsya, Varāha Purāṇas and Siddhānta Śiromaṇi). It does not appear in the list of dwīpas given in the Padma Purāṇa and the Mahābhārata.

Besides the seven mountains, seven rivers, seven varṣas, seven rulers and four castes there is again in the description of this dwīpa a definite pointer to the identification of the dwīpa that is the true 'Plakṣa' from which the dwīpa derives its name. 'Plakṣa' is the Pākhar tree which is characteristic of warm temperate or Mediterranean lands. Wilford identifies this tree with willow and others with fig. Willow is definitely incorrect while, fig may be possible. One would, therefore, without hesitation identify this dwīpa with the basin of the Mediterranean which is the third climatic belt north of the Equator in the northern hemisphere.

According to Wilford,[41] 'The name still persists in Placia, a town in Mysia, the inhabitants of which, with those in Scylace, had a peculiar language, which was the same with that spoken by the Pelasgi of Cristone or Crotone, about Tyrrhanians in Italy, and by the Pelagsi, who lived on the shores of the Hellespont, according to Herodotus. Thus the denomination of Plakṣa or Palengṣa seems to be the same with Placia and Pelagsia and the Pelagsi came originally from the lesser Asia'. The view is also supported by V. V. Iyer[42] who identifies Plakṣa dwīpa with Greece and adjoining lands.

*Puṣkaradwīpa*

The accounts of this dwīpa are given in different Purāṇas at considerable length. The Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa says that there is no rainfall, no springs, no fountains in this dwīpa nor is there any vegetation. The Skanda says that between the two provinces of Puṣkaradwīpa (Mahāvitaṁ and Dhātake Khaṇḍam) runs the mountain Mānasa in a circle (like a full moon-Matsya). The account in the Varāha and Viṣṇu is much the same. The note in the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa about the mountain chains being one in two or two in one appears also in the Liṅga and Kūrma Purāṇas. All the Purāṇas agree that the exterior province is Mahāvitaṁ and the interior is Dhātaki. It is stated in the Matsya Purāṇa that the Mahāvitaṁ is the western portion and exterior to the mountain. The Vāmana Purāṇa and the Garuḍa Purāṇa give a harrowing account of the prevailing climatic conditions and dwell on the fiendish savagery of the tribes living in it. It says, 'The dwīpa is a land of horrors, devoid of purity, cruel and leading to the destruction of the soul. It is the land of demons, full of awful hells twentyone in number'. Other Purāṇas, however, mention Puṣkara dwīpa as a paradise (Viṣṇu) which conflicts with the text of the above descriptions.

The descriptions given above can be reconciled if we note all the facts mentioned in the account of Puṣkaradwīpa and analyse them with the help of a relief map of the world (Fig. 3). These points are:

(1) Puṣkaradwīpa is situated in the same latitudes as Uttara Kuru. Since the seasons there are the same as in the latter (Matsya and Vāyu), we must search for Puṣkaradwīpa in northern latitudes.

(2) The climate of Dhātaki and Mahāvitaṁ which form part of the Puṣkaradwīpa is of 'dry' type, since 'It does not rain there, neither are there any rivers in those regions. The climate is also not influenced by heat or cold (i.e., it is dry all the year round). The water supply and plant life of the country depends on water from the hills' (Matsya).

(3) The name of the dwīpa is derived from the fact 'it is surrounded

by Puṣkara (lakes of lotuses)' (Matsya). Therefore we have to find a land in the northern latitudes in the vicinity of which there are a number of lakes.

(4) There is, according to Matsya, a huge circular mountain chain named Citrasānu situated in the eastern half of the dwīpa. The western half is dominated by another great circular range named Mānasa with Mahāvita (son of Mānas) as its spur covering its western rim. Other Purāṇas also agree that there is a mountain range running through the whole extent of the dwīpa and dividing it into two provinces one of which is exterior and the other interior with respect of the above mentioned ranges. In addition some Purāṇas qualify this statement by saying that this chain of mountains is really a continuous range but appears as split into two, meaning thereby that there is a saddle or break in the range which allows access across it between the exterior and interior region. Mānasa, according to Matsya, looks like a *full moon rising near the sea coast*.

(5) A marked feature of the dwīpa is its occupational structure. 'The practice of rearing domestic animals, trade, husbandry are non-existent there' (Matsya). This points to the fact that the people living there are nomads and hunters and in general primitive and savage as described in other Purāṇas as well.

(6) These are two contrasting pictures of the dwīpa, a paradise on the one hand and a desolate waste on the other. This signifies that the 'central range is fairly high and is a distinct climatic barrier between its constituent parts. One side is a dry desert and the other, suitable for human occupation. It promises a paradise for those who approach the dwīpa from one direction, while it presents the appearance of a wasteland if one enters it from the opposite direction. Such phenomena of knife-edged boundaries between two regions of strong contrast are not uncommon. For example, if we approach Peru from the west, it presents a dry, treeless, barren appearance, while if we enter it from the east it presents the most luxuriant equatorial forests.

(7) It is surrounded by an ocean of fresh water and surrounds the sea of milk (Kṣīra-Sāgara).

The regions which broadly satisfy conditions (1), (3), (5) and (7) above are the Scandinavian lands, Finland, Northern European Russia and Siberia, since these lands occur in the same latitudes as those of Uttara Kuru. They contain numerous lakes, support nomadic people who live by hunting and are washed by the Arctic waters or the waters of the cold current which flows past the Bering Sea along the eastern coast of Siberia to Japan. These waters have the lowest salinity among the oceans of the world and may be called 'fresh water'.

Condition (2) excludes Scandinavia since its rainfall is between 40″ and 80″, much more than what is required by this clause. In fact, Scandinavia is one of the fairly moist regions of the world, which is contrary to the picture of the western segment of Puṣkaradwīpa presented by the Purāṇas.

Condition (4) excludes Finland and North European Russia. In the latter case the Urals may be taken as one of the ranges of Puṣkaradwīpa but in the first instance it is not circular (a point on which all Purāṇas are unanimous) and secondly, there is no other mountain range which could represent the other equally important ranges which occur on its east or west.

The western portion of Siberia is included in Uttarakuru, a sub-region of Jambū Dwīpa by the Purāṇas.[43] The central and eastern parts of Siberia are the only two regions which satisfy conditions (1) to (5) and (7). Of these two, only the eastern part of Siberia and the adjoining lands satisfy (6). This narrows down our investigation to only one region—the north-eastern seaboard of Asia which qualifies for identification as Puṣkaradwīpa. Let us examine this region in detail concentrating only on inhabited or habitable lands which are covered by this region.

The Sea of Japan is enclosed by a ring of mountain ranges. On its east are the Japanese Highlands and on its west are the Highlands of Korea, Manchurian Coast (culminating in Peishan peak) and Sikhota Alin which 'rise near the sea coast'.[44] This circular montain chain is almost continuous with very narrow breaks in the Korea strait and the Gulf of Tartary. Suppose we call the Japanese Highlands, Chitrasanu, the eastern segment of the circular range of Puṣkaradwīpa and the western coastal ranges as Mānasa, the picture of Puṣkaradwīpa appears to emerge on the world map. If this assumption is true we should have another range Mahāvita parallel to Mānasa to its west. There happens to be a range, the Khingan range which lies to the west and almost 'guards the western frontiers' of this region.[45] To the east of this range which may be called Mahāvita, there is a prosperous and rich land, which corresponds to the central plains of Manchuria while a desert Dhātaki Khaṇda on its west is represented the Gobi desert in our scheme.

If these premises are correct, then the mountain Pitrsoma is the mountain Fujiyama[46] of Japan, the Kṣira Sāgara is the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Fresh Water is the north-western Pacific. Puṣkaradwīpa, therefore, covered the whole of Japan, Manchuria and the south-eastern Siberia.

### *Śālmaladwīpa*

(1) The characteristic tree of this dwīpa is *śālmali* or silk-cotton tree which gives the dwīpa its name. This tree is commonly found on the margins of equatorial regions or of monsoon lands with moderate rainfall. Hence we should locate Śālmaladwīpa in the rainy tropical belt of the old world.

(2) The annual range of temperature in this dwīpa is low, since according to Matsya Purāṇa (122, 93-99), it has neither summers nor winters, that is, there are no seasonal variations there.

(3) It is a region of high cloudiness since, 'no stars, planets or the moon are visible'.

(4) 'The people of this dwīpa obtain the best victuals of all the six flavours without any effort on their part' (Matsya, 122, 100). This brings out the significant characteristic of the region that the people who live there are 'food gatherers' and not 'food producers'. The vegetation cover produces enough food to satisfy their needs.

The above features of Śālmaladwīpa are more than enough to justify its location in the equatorial region of the old world. There are two such regions within this belt, the equatorial lands of Africa and East Indies. The latter were included traditionally in the South-Eastern Peninsulas of Jambū Dwīpa.[47] Therefore, by the process of elimination we reach the conclusion that by 'Śālmalidwīpa', the Purāṇas mean the tropical part of Africa bordering the Indian Ocean on the west. It included Madagasgar—the Zenj of the Arab and Persian geographers the Harina of the Purāṇics, and the Śankh Dwīpa of some other writers.

### *Krauñcadwīpa*

It is a pity that the Purāṇas do not mention any climatic or vegetational characteristics of this region. Therefore we have to fall back upon miscellaneous information regarding the dwīpa contained in not only the Purāṇas but also in other works. The information collected from the various sources is preseted below:

(1) Mount Krauñca from which the dwīpa derives its name, appears for the first time in Taittirīya Āraṇyaka (1, 31, 2). This means that it has had associations with Jambū Dwīpa (and incidentally with India) since remote antiquity. In all probability, therefore, this region was situated in the immediate vicinity of Jambū Dwīpa.

(2) The Mahābhārata (12, 14, 21-5) locates Krauñcadwīpa in the west (of Meru) while the same epic (6, 12) places it in the north. The inevitable conclusion is that the dwīpa touched the Jambū Dwīpa in the north-west. The Bṛhat Saṁhitā (14, 24) and the Rāmāyaṇa (4, 43, 25) locate it in the north.[48]

(3) The dwīpa is watered by 'thousands of streams'[49] in addition to the seven important rivers 'flowing with great volume of water'[50] mentioned by name. The dwīpa, therefore, is definitely a humid region with abundant rainfall.

(4) Although all the dwīpas, except the Jambū, find different places in the sequence of dwīpas enumerated by different Purāṇas and other works, it is noteworthy that Kuśa and Krauñca always appear successively in all of them. It suggests that in all probability the two dwīpas were situated close to each other.

(5) The statement that 'the Krauñcadwīpa surrounds the Ghṛitoda sea like the tyre of a wheel'[51] provides an important clue to the location of this dwīpa.

We have therefore to find an inland sea situated to the north-west of Jambū Dwīpa, virtually surrounded by a well-watered populated[52] belt containing a number of mountains which stand in or near it and also a number of voluminous rivers which flow through it.

There are five enclosed or partially enclosed seas to the north-west of Jambū Dwīpa, the Baltic, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Caspian and the Aral Sea. Of these only the Black sea practically fulfils all the conditions mentioned in 1-6 above. The Baltic, the Aral and the Caspian are flanked by deserts (hot or cold) which are either uninhabited or uninhabitable and therefore the bordering lands do not qualify for the term 'dwīpa' applied by the Purāṇas. Besides their characteristics as regards climate, rivers and mountains are just opposite to those mentioned in the Purāṇas. The Mediterranean region is too large a unit to be considered as an annular region surrounding an inland sea. Besides, its southern margin is a desert practically reaching its southern shore We may, therefore, conclude that the Krauñcadwīpa of the Purāṇas is represented by the basin of the Black Sea.[53]

# CHAPTER III The Mountain System of the Puranas

MERU or the abode of Brahmā is the pivot of and the key to the Purāṇic geography of the world. It is the point of reference round which are symmetrically arranged the mountain systems of the Purāṇic world. The mountains delimit and are closely associated with the regions and the countries, which collectively form the Purāṇic continents.

The Vedas do not mention Meru. It is referred to as Mahāmeru or the 'Great Meru' in the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka (I,7, I,3), but there is no indication of its location and size. The Epics, the Buddhist and the Jaina scriptures and the Purāṇas contain practically identical notices regarding the size and extent of Meru and its central location in relation to the continents or major regions of the world. The Persians, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Jews and the Arabs repeat the traditional nodality of the Meru in their cosmography. Although the details and denominations vary, the central idea is practically the same as in the Purāṇas. The Bundesh and Vendidad-Sada maintain that the central continent, Khonneretz Bami is surrounded in the east, south and west by a sea called Zare-Ferakh-Kand and in the north by a high mountain named Al-Burj which corresponds to the Purāṇic Meru. The Al-Burj according to Zoroastrian books not only gave birth to all the mountains of the world but it was from this mountain, that the streams which water our earth descended.[1] The Chinese too believed that the centre of the earth from south to north lay in the high and snow-covered Tsing-ling mountains (or Sumeru), from which emerged chains of high mountains and which gave rise to many rivers.[2] The Jews, as well, made this mountain a part of their cosmographical system. Isaiah, making use of such ideas as were generally accepted in his times, introduced Lucifer (eq. Swarbhanu in Sanskrit) boasting that he would exalt his throne above the stars of God and would sit on the mountain of the Congregation (cf. 'Sabhā' in Sanskrit), 'on the side of the north'. Meru, according to Hindu tradition, is also the rendezvous of gods where the Sabhā or the assembly of gods is held on its northern side. The Mountain of God is also alluded to in the psalms, though, in some instances, it seems to imply Mount Moriah.

In the Purāṇas the descriptions of Meru, its location and extent and the great mountain-ranges associated with it as well as the regions which are bounded by these ranges and their sub-divisions are very much similar. The Agni and Brahma Purāṇas are word for word the same as the Viṣṇu and the Kurma, Matsya, Mārkaṇḍeya, and Vāyu present many passages common to them and the Viṣṇu, or to one another. The Vāyu, as usual goes more fully into details. The Bhāgavata differs in its nomenclature of subordinate details from all, and is followed by the Padma. The other Purāṇas either omit the subject or refer to it only very briefly. The Mahābhārata (Bhīṣma Parva) presents an account which is essentially the same, and many of the stanzas are common to it and the different Purāṇas.

Regarding the size and shape of Meru, the Viṣṇu Purāṇa says, 'Jambū Dwīpa is in the centre of all these (continents); and in the centre of this continent (Jambū Dwīpa) is the golden mountain Meru. The height of Meru is 84,000 yojanas, and its depth below the surface of the earth is 16,000 yojanas. Its diameter at the summit is 32,000 yojanas, and at its base, 16,000: so that this mountain is like the seedcup of the "lotus of the earth".'[1]

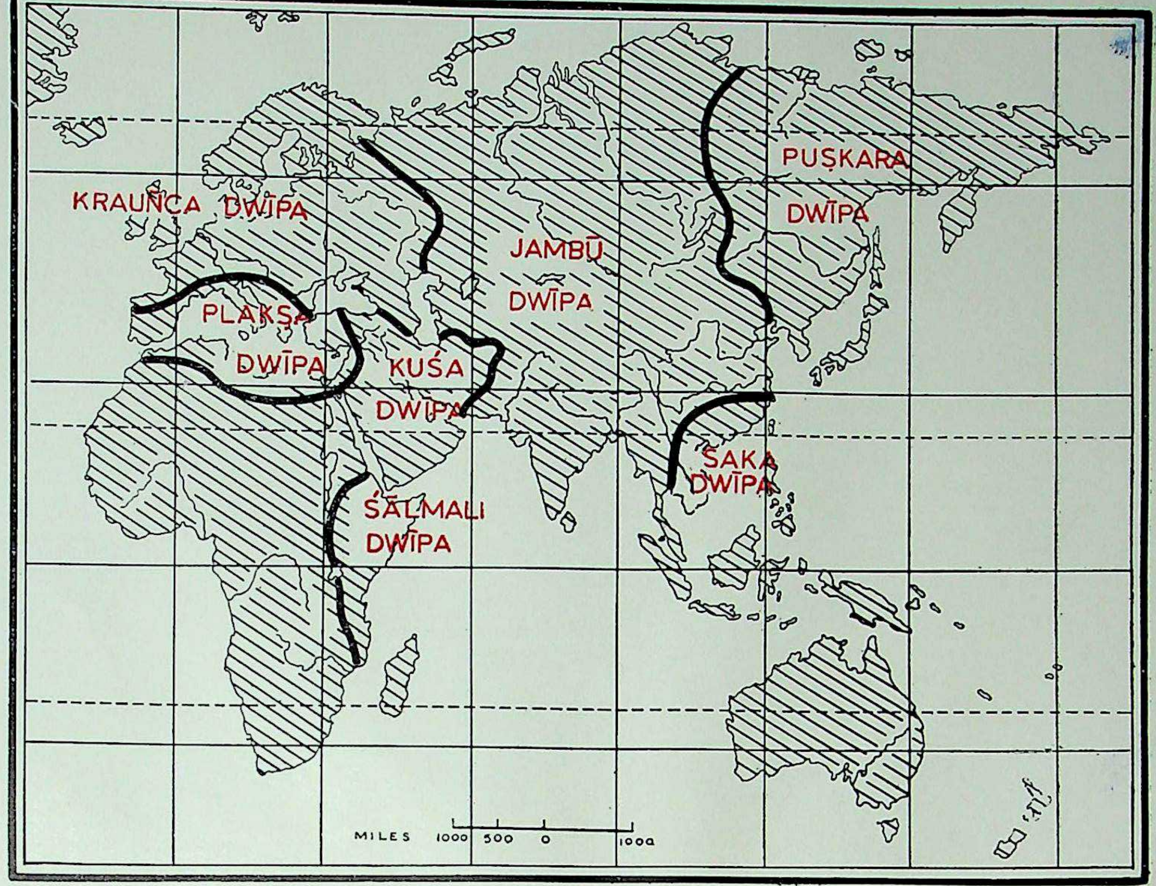
The shape of Meru, according to the above description, is that of an inverted cone; and on the analogy of the seedcup, its form should be circular: but there seems to be some uncertainty regarding this subject amongst the Purāṇics. The Padma compares its form to the bell-shape flower of '*Dhaturā*'. The Vāyu represents it as having four sides of different colours, i.e., white on the east, yellow on the south, black on the west, and red on the north. There are other opinions as well regarding the outline of the mountain Meru, e.g., according to Atṛi it has 100 angles, to Bhṛgu, a thousand; Sāvarṇi calls it octangular, Bhaguri, quadrangular and Vārṣāyaṇi says it has a thousand angles; Galava makes it saucer-shaped; Garga, twisted like braided hair, and others maintain that it is circular. The Liṅga makes its eastern face the colour of ruby; its southern, that of lotus; its western, golden; and its northern, coral. The Matsya has the same colour as the Vāyu and both contain this line, 'Four-coloured, golden, four-cornered, lofty', but the Vāyu compares its summit in one place to a saucer, and observes that its circumference must be thrice its diameter. The Matsya also, rather incompatibly, says the measurement is that a circular form, but it is considered quadrangular.

According to the Buddhists of Ceylon, Meru is said to be of the same diameter throughout (i.e. cylindrical). Those of Nepal conceive it to be shaped like a drum. The description of Meru and its surrounding mountains, as given in the Brahmāṇḍa is exactly the same as in the Vāyu.

The above references bring out the following information regarding Meru:

Fig. 3

THE PURĀṆIC DWĪPAS


KRAUÑCA DWĪPA
PLAKṢA DWĪPA
KUŚA DWĪPA
JAMBŪ DWĪPA
PUṢKARA DWĪPA
ŚAKA DWĪPA
ŚĀLMALI DWĪPA
MILES 1000 500 0 1000

(1) Meru signifies a vast plateau of immense height lying in the heart of the central continent, Jambū Dwīpa. Its height and size, relative to other mountain systems and regions, is shown in a sketch (see Fig. 4). This sketch has been drawn to scale, according to the description given in the Viṣṇu, Matsya, Vāyu and Bhāgawata Purāṇas.

(2) It indicates quite clearly that Meru is not the name of an isolated peak, a single mountain, or an individual range. It is a fairly extensive plateau hemmed in by a ring of mountain peaks, so that the top of Meru resembles a saucer—i.e., it is depressed in the centre and elevated along its margins.

(3) The sides of Meru are extremely precipitous. In other words the vast plateau is bounded on all sides by steep escarpments, so that ascent to the top of the plateau from any point on the base is not only difficult but very nearly impossible. The Purāṇas emphasise this steepness by saying very aptly and concisely that the shape of Meru resembles a cylinder. This will happen if the escarpment is just steep. In places where it overhangs it would give the impression of an inverted cone—with a smaller base and a wider top. If the escarpment has a convex profile, it at once brings to the observer's mind the shape of a drum.

(4) The assertion that Meru is a circular, square, octagonal or thousand-sided, implies that observers must have travelled round Meru and taken different routes—all close to the escarpment. Those who changed their bearings four times to circumnavigate the Meru, naturally described it as square in shape while those who changed them frequently described it as many sided as the number of times they had to change their general direction of movement. The best way of summarily describing the circumference of Meru was therefore what Viṣṇu Purāṇa says, i.e., it is circular which simply means that one can make a complete round of Meru and come back to his starting point. The shape of a vast massive mountain system like Meru could not be ascertained or visualised otherwise.

(5) The height of Meru is given as 84,000 yojanas while that of the ranges north and south of it (including Himavān, Himavat, etc.) is given as 2,000 yojanas (see Fig. 4) which gives the N-S section across Jambū Dwīpa). This appears to be very much out of proportion since there is no mountain in the world which is 42 times the height of the Himavān or Himavat. The inference is clear that the staggering escarpment of Meru when observed from its base, appears to be of tremendous height, even higher than the highest mountain, for the obvious reason that from this position one cannot see the peak or top of the escarpment which dissolves in the misty haze above.

Keeping the above facts in mind and assuming that Himvat is the same as our Himālayas, let us attempt to identify Meru in the great mountain complex which lies north of the Himālayas—Himālayas taken in its broadest sense, i.e., the chains of mountains which extend from east to west and bound Bhārata in the north.

The accompanying map of the Himālayan and Trans-Himālayan peaks[4] (Fig. 5) depicts in a simplified form and in a generalised manner the mountain systems of Asia. The peaks of the mountains are classified according to their magnitude and some idea of the relative heights of the different ranges can be visualised at a glance from the map. Besides, a north-south cross-section has also been added to bring out the sequence of ranges and intervening valleys.

It will be seen that there are only five elevated regions in the vast Himālayan and Trans-Himālayan zone which could possibly be identified with Meru and whose characteristics approximately, if not exactly, corresponded with those laid down in the Purāṇas and analysed in paras 1-5 above.

These are:

(a) The region covered by the Karakoram cluster of peaks.
(b) The region covered by Dhaulagiri cluster of peaks.
(c) The region covered by the Everest cluster of peaks.
(d) The Tibetan Plateau enclosed by the Kun-lun and Himālayan arcs.
(e) The Pāmīr high plateau enclosed by snow-clad peaks of the Hindūkush, Karakoram, Tien Shan and Trans-Alai system.

The great Karakoram complex lies between the Tarim and the Indus basins, west of the political frontier of Tibet. It lies roughly between 70°E and 79°E, its physical limits being the Hunza-Gilgit valley in the west and the Nubra-Shyok valley in the east, and its northern limit is rather the parapet above the Tarim basin than the Shimshal-Shaksgan depression, while a 'straight' line that can be drawn through Gilgit, Ronda and Khapalu, never above 10,000 feet makes an admirable southern limit. The focus of this complex is the Boltoro glacier, from which apart from K2 (28,250′) ten other peaks radiate at heights between 23,000′ and 28,000′ and no equal area, even of the Himālayas can rival this mass of glacier-mantled giants.

Overhanging the Shaksgan valley and within ten miles of the river are three Teram Kangri peaks (24,200′–24,500′), two Gasherbrum (26,000′–26,500′) and two sentinels of K2—Broad Peak (26,400′) and Staircase Peak (24,750′); and over the western parting, Masherbrum (K1) seems to have two peaks above 25,600′ high and Bride Peak which is 25,100′ high.

Though there is this special focus, three parallel ranges may be distinguished most clearly and most easily as North, Central and South, even if special features or historic names are associated with them, e.g., Aghil, Muztagh and Ladakh.

The above description of the Karakoram cluster partly satisfies the conditions which according to the Purāṇas, apply to Meru. It is no doubt a vast, snow-covered, inaccessible, high plateau dotted with numerous magnificient peaks and surrounded by the deep ravines of rivers which flow round it. But the following primary facts do not qualify it for its identification with Meru:

(i) The shape of the cluster: it is an oblong region and can in no way be considered or imagined even as approximately circular in shape.

(ii) The most important fact that the four principal rivers which flow from Meru to the four cardinal points is not true of this region.

(iii) The top of the plateau, taken as whole, is more like that of a corrugated roof (i.e., parallel ridges with irregular intervening valleys) and not 'saucer-shaped' as described by the Purāṇas.

(iv) The major regions of Jambū Dwīpa which lie to the East, West, South and North of Meru according to the Purāṇas do not occur as such with reference to this cluster.

The Dhaulagiri cluster consists of 6 great peaks (above 24,000′) within a radius of about 9 miles, situated on the Great Himālayan Range and its western bifurcation at Dhaulagiri. They are linear summits surmounted by great peaks of almost the same altitude. However, its size, shape, drainage and regional relationship do not in any way conform to the pattern prescribed by the Purāṇas. It may be safely ignored so far as its identification with Meru is concerned. This observation also applies to (c) above, which, with the exception of the fact that they are high plateaus, do not satisfy the other essential conditions laid down in (2) to (5) above. Tibet is too big a unit to be considered as a possible answer to the Purāṇic Meru. Even if we take the whole plateau of Tibet as Meru, the arrangement of mountain ranges and corresponding regions with respect to Meru becomes asymmetric which is against their general alignment as given in the Purāṇas.

The plateau of Pāmīr, 'though constantly spoken as such is no more a plateau than the Armenian crown, which it resembles in some essentials; for it is approximately a square segment of the folded belt, running 150 miles both east and west and north and south. But while the mass of the Armenian square is a real crown, from which the land falls in all directions, the Pāmīr is really a shallow bowl (cf. the "saucer-shape" of the

Purāṇas), overhung by the gable-ends of the Hindūkush, the Tien Shen Kun-lun and the Himālayas. These gable-ends justify its name'[5] (cf. the names: Pa-meer and Meer-u). This Pamīr bowl (or saucer) is bounded all around by high ranges studded with snow-covered jagged peaks, enveloped in cloud and festooned with glistening glaciers. These ranges are the Alai and the Trans-Alai in the north, the Sarikol and the Kashghar on the east, the Hindūkush on the south and the Khwaja Mohammad range on the west. The peaks which occur round the plateau are, from the north in a clockwise direction, Pk. Stalin (24,623′) Communist Academy Peak (19,239′), Peak Lenin (23,542′), Peak of Peter I range (above 23,000′), Kungur Peaks (No. 42 and 48, 25,146′), Mustagh Ata (24,388′), the peaks of Wakhan, Shugnan, Rushan and Yazgulem (above 17,000′).

The Pāmīr is the focal point of Central Asian drainage. Major rivers flow from it towards west (Oxus), south (Indus), east (Tarim) and north (Syr Daria). It is also flanked by E-W mountain chains to the north and south.

On these premises, one can safely come to the conclusion that the Meru of the Purāṇas can be identified with the Great Pāmīr Knot of Asia. If we accept the identification of Meru with the Pāmīr plateau, the location of the principal mountain ranges of Jambū Dwīpa as given in the Purāṇas can be investigated.

According to the Purāṇas, north of Meru there are, in order, three mountain ranges, the Nīla, Śweta and Sṛṅgavān (see Fig. 6). They are respectively the boundary ranges of Ramayaka, Hiraṇmaya and Kuru, and spread east and west up to the 'Salt Ocean'. They are two thousand yojanas wide. In length each succeeding range is a little shorter than the preceding one. Similarly, to the south of Meru are the three ranges, the Niṣadha, Hemakūṭ and Himālaya (or Himavān) spreading east and west like the preceding ones. The width of these ranges is the same as that of the northern ranges. They are the boundary ranges of Harivarṣa, Kimpurṣa and Bhārata-Varṣa.

Between the Niṣadha and Nīla there are three varṣas. The one round Meru and bounded by Gandhamādana on the west and Mālyavān on the east is Ilāvṛta Varṣa. On the east of Ilāvṛta Varṣa is Bhadravarṣa and on its west is Ketumāla. The relative positions of these ranges and the varṣas which they delimit are shown in the accompanying diagram of Jambū Dwīpa. This diagram does not incorporate one more characteristic of the northernmost and southernmost ranges, i.e., the Sṛṅgavān and Himavat (as given in some Purāṇas, for instance, the Matsya and the Vāyu) that both these ranges are curved like a bow with their concave sides towards the north and the south respectively.

A comparison of this diagram with the accompanying physical map of Central Asia will show that:

*Śṛṅgavān* represents Kara Tau-Kirghiz-Ketman chain.
*Śweta* represents Nura Tau-Turkistan-Atbashi chain.
*Nīla* represents Zarafshan-Trans-Alai-Tien Shan chain.
*Niṣadha* represents Hindukush-Kunlun chain.
*Hemakūṭa* represents Ladakh-Kailash-Trans-Himālayan chain.
*Himavān* represents the Great Himāyalan range.

There, however, appears to be a discrepancy. The Purāṇas say that all these ranges extend from sea to sea. This is literally true in the case of the Himavān only. Why and where did the Purāṇics make this obvious mistake in the case of other ranges? If we look at the map of Asia closely we find that the Śṛṅgavān, Śweta and Nīla end on the west in the Kizil Kum and Kara Kum deserts, and on the east in the Gobi desert. The Niṣadha extends from the Caspian to the China Sea (taking Tsinling Mountain as its eastern extension). The Hemakūṭa extends from the sea on the east to the Iranian desert on the west. Thus in each case, the range extends from sea to sea—if we define 'sea' as a large expanse of sand or water. Did the Purāṇics hold the view that as barriers to human settlement and movement, the sea of sand and that of water, were synonymous when considering the geography of the inhabited world!

Details of a few main ranges, mentioned above, are given in the Purāṇas in different chapters. There are whole chapters on Meru and the Himavān, Niṣadha, Devakūṭa and Kailāsa ranges but the account of the ranges north of Meru is strikingly bare and sketchy. Besides, while the southern ranges are sanctified by their association with a number of gods, the northern ranges are in general not so honoured. The reason is obvious; the Purāṇics were more interested in the southern and central regions of Asia with which they were directly associated for thousands of years.

About the Niṣadha, the Purāṇas say[6]:

> Now I will describe fully the western Niṣadha range. In the central peak of that range is the beautiful temple of Viṣṇu, decorated with gold. It is served by saints and Ṛṣis and is full of Yakṣas, Apsaras, Gandharvas, etc. God Hari, the creator in yellow garments, himself resides there and saints are always serving him. In the internal peak of that Niṣadha range is the beautiful city of demons named Ulanghī, decorated with a variety of metals. There are gates of gold and silver and festoons of bright gold and the city is full of passages, caves and roads. Rows of palaces and houses shine like burnished gold and there are beautiful gardens at several places. That city is full of snakes, which guard the

entrance gate, and make the entry of enemies impossible. That city of thirty yojanas is always in prosperity. On its southern side several demons reside and in the central part of that range is the city called Deśapradeśa. The entrance to this town is through a 'cave'. On the western peak there are several prosperous cities of Devas, Demons and Nāgas. At the foot of that mountain there is a Somaśilā where the moon shines once a year. Ṛṣis, Kinnaras and Gandharvas always worship the master of stars, Candra. The peak of that mountain is called Brahma-Pārśva Peak. In heaven it is called the abode of Sūryadeva Brahmā. Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Demons serve Mahātmā Brahmā through salutation and worship. There is also the residing place of the fire god Vahni Deva) which is famous in all *lokas.* Saints, servants, etc. are worshipping Vahni. On the northern beautiful peak of that mountain where Ṛṣis, Saints and a variety of Demons reside, is located a city named Hemacitra, famous in all the three *lokas.* There are three places of three Devas. On the eastern peak, in the central, and on the western are the places of Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā and Mahādeva respectively. They are always worshipped by powerful Demons, Gandharvas and Yakṣas. On the three peaks of that superior mountain, there are at places beautiful cities of Yakṣas, Gandharva and Nāgas....

The Western Niṣadha is the Hindūkush. Let us study the location of its principal peaks. The highest peak of the Hindūkush is Trichi Mir (T32, height, 25,436′), 10 miles N N E of T32 is another peak T56 (height 24,611′) and 9 miles N E of T32 is peak T65 (height 24,543′). On the main range about 25–30 miles towards E is the peak named Sidi-Istragh while further east on the main ridge is another but much lower peak Lankho (22,641′). The last one, though lower in height, is of special importance, since it dominates the route which linked the main E W route across the Pāmīr region with the Indian route which branched off from it across the Baroghil pass through Darkot.

These are all the high peaks of Hindūkush (or Western Niṣadha). A simple sketch (Fig. 7) showing these peaks and their correct alignment with the main range, would not only enable us to understand the passage given above but would also help us in locating the settlements referred to therein.

It would be observed that the Purāṇic location of peaks on the western Niṣadha (Hindūkush) range tallies exactly with the position of peaks as depicted in the sketch. Trichi Mir is the Purāṇic Trikūṭa whose three majestic peaks T32, T56 and T65 represent the Hindu Trinity, i.e. Mahādeva (Sankara), Brahmā and Viṣṇu (Nārāyaṇa) respectively. The main range shown on the sketch and which skirts the Pyandzh in the south is associated with Viṣṇu, though no specific names or associations are indicated for Sidi

Istragh or Lankho. The Purāṇas also mention that on the northern and southern slopes and at the foot of the main range lived the barbarians (i.e., 'Demons') while north of Trichi Mir—in the valley of the Oxus and the upper and middle Kokcha valley there were many cities of Devas (or civilised people). These cities of Devas refer to the settlements of Afghan Badakshan which have been mentioned by Holditch[7] in these terms:

> The northern slopes and plains of Badakshan between the mountains and the Oxus, form part of a region which once represented the wealth of civilization in Asia. The whole region was dotted with towns of importance in medieval times and the fame of its beauty had passed down the ages from the days of Assyria and Greece to those of the destroying Mongol hordes.

The barbarous tribes, living near the central peaks of the main range, are the uncouth and savage Kafirs, who, driven from many directions into the most inaccesible pastures of the hills by the advance of stronger races north and south, have occupied remote valleys preserving their own dialects. The settlement of Deśapradeśa lying to the south of the main range probably refers to Dashpar region, which was occupied by the warlike Turkish raiders who were for long a menace to the routes and settlements of the northern valleys. The city of Ulanghī (lit., 'a saddle or pass') is probably associated with the Baroghil Pass and corresponds to Darkot (lit., a 'gateway'). Hemacitra is obviously Chitral, an important town of the N.W. Frontier. The abode or the 'zone of influence' of Vahni Deva points definitely to the settlements of fire-worshippers of Wakhan, Ishkashim, Shignan and Roshan who dominated the upper valley of the Oxus for centuries.

It is surprising that the Purāṇic account of the Himālayan chains, i.e. the Hemakūṭa and Himavān is more poetic than precise or convincing. It is a sort of generalised description which runs as follows:

> Sūtajī remarked: Kailāsa is located on the delightful central peak of Deva-Kūṭa mountain. It is one hundred yojanas in length and fifty yojanas in breadth. Its peak is white, calm, delightful and of good expanse. Several saints live there. There is a big city full of rows of big houses decorated with gold and diamonds. This city belongs to the great god Kubera. That city is safe from the enemies' attack and is magnificent and prosperous. There is a meeting chamber named Vipula in the midst of that town which has several pillars and is decorated with gold in different ways. There is also an aeroplane named 'Puṣpaka' decorated with numerous gems. It contains all essential things, is very fast-moving, is propelled only by desire and is also fitted with gold wires. This aeroplane is used by Mahātmā Kubera. Yakṣendra and Piṅgala Deva, worshipped by all Demons reside there along with Yakṣas, Gan-

dharvas, Kinnaras, Saints, Panegyrists and Apsarās. Mahātmā Kubera has eight everlasting treasure houses named Padma, Mahāpadma, Makara, Kacchapa, Kumuda, Śankha, Nīla and Nandaka. These are full of jewels. Indra also resides near Kubera, Fire-Yama, and Devas and other Apsarās also reside there. Attendants first worship Mahātmā Yakṣendra and then walk behind him. There is also the Mandākini river with placid water, where ghats are studded with jewels, and beautiful flowers blossom. They are decorated with golden, blue and beryl-coloured lotuses. In that water, the wives of Yakṣas and Gandharvas always bathe and the water of that Mandākini river is drunk by Devas, Demons, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, ghosts and others. Apart from this two other rivers named Alakananda and Nanda also flow there, full of nectar-like water. This water is used by the Devas. On the eastern peak of that mountain there are ten cities of Gandharvas.... There is no limit to the prosperity of these cities.

There are, several rows of big palaces. Bright like fire, powerful Harikeśa, Citrasena, Śara, etc., the ten Gandharva kings are the owners of that place. On the western peak of that mountain there are separate palaces of Yakṣas. That place is eighty yojanas in length and thirty yojanas in breadth. There are several big houses. There are thirty prosperous palaces of the people. Happiness always reigns in these houses and thirty Yakṣas like Mahāmāli, Sunetra, Maṇivara, etc., are the owners of those houses. The illustrious Vaiśravaṇa is the master of the aforesaid Yakṣas.

On the southern side of that Kailāsa, the Himālaya is located. There are several gardens. There are many falls and caves. There are innumerable peaks, passes and plains. This Himālaya is stretching from the eastern sea to the western sea. At several places on these mountains there are the cities of Kinnaras, which are located in the central part of the many-peaked Himālaya, about one hundred in number. Here men and women are always happy and the subjects are healthy and prosperous. One hundred kings, like Druma, Sugrīva, Sainya, Bhagadatta are the owners of these powerful Kinnaras. In this mountain Mahādeva Rudra was married to Umā. Umā Devī did her hard penance here. Mahādeva in the garb of Kirāta played here and Mahādeva and Pārvatī saw the whole of Jambū Dwīpa. The playground of Rudra Deva is full of different ghosts and full of strange flowers and fruits. Beautiful, big-eyed, happy Kinnari women reside in the caves and mountains of this land of mountains. Here Yakṣas, handsome Gandharvas and innumerable Apsarās are always happy. There is the famous Umavān. Here Śankara converted his body, half into male and half into female. There is Śaravaṇa where Kārtikeya was born. Here he expressed his desire to destroy Krauñca Śailavana. Kārtikeya has got his chariot here which is adorned with a flag. The destroyer of enemies left his power in the Krauñca mountain full of coloured and strange flowers. Great Devas like Indra made Kārtikeya, the commander of the Devas who was decorated here.

He was bright like twelve Suns. There are several places of Kārtikeya, full of ghosts, etc. In the beautiful hinterland of the Himālaya mountain there is Kārtikeya's playground named Pāṇḍu Sila. It is said that on the beautiful eastern land is the residing place of saints which scholars call as Kalapagrāma. In the Himālaya are the āśramas of Mārkaṇḍeya, Vaśiṣṭa, Bhārata, Nala, Viśvāmitra, Uddalaka, etc., and hundreds and thousands of āśramas of Ṛṣis. There are several residing places of saints. Yakṣa Gandharvas roam there and several low-class people also live there. That mountain is rich in several minerals. Several types of creatures live there. Thousands of rivers flow from that mountain.[8]

In the opening sentence the term 'Devakūṭa' should be corrected as Hemakūṭa. The Devakūṭa is a different mountain range which with Jaṭhara has been defined by the authors of the Purāṇas as a double range joining the Niṣadha and Nīla on the east of Meru. It has, therefore, nothing to do with the Kailāsa mountain. The great range Hemakūṭa is to the north of and parallel to the Himavān. In the above paragraph Kailāsa is supposed to be located on the 'Central Peak' of Devakūṭa. Obviously Devakūṭa here stands for Hemakūṭa.

The facts which are brought out by the above description of the Hemakūṭa and Himavān may be summarised as follows:

(i) The Hemakūṭa is the modern Kailāsa Trans-Himālayan range.

(ii) Purāṇic Kailāsa is only a peak of the Hemakūṭa mountain. It is the existing Kailāsa mountain and not the Kailāsa range.

(iii) The traditional city of Kubera (Alakāpurī of Kālidāsa's Meghadūta) lies on or near the Mountain Kailāsa.

(iv) The eight 'treasure houses' of Kubera represent eight lesser peaks of the same range which lie in the vicinity of the Kailāsa mountain.

(v) The location of Mandākinī, Alakanandā and Nandā show that the Purāṇics were thoroughly conversant with the minor topographical features of the Mānsarovara basin.

(vi) There were prosperous settlements ('10 cities of Gandharvas ruled by 10 Gandharva kings') on the east of Kailāsa mountain while on its west 'thirty palaces of Yakṣas' were located. This indicates the importance and superiority of the eastern region which had well-settled and better organised population groups over the western region which had a poorer, less civilised and scattered population. It is to be noted that the 'eastern region' recognised correctly by the Purāṇics in the above statement is a geographical region with a high percentage of sun-shine, a moist, fertile soil of fine quality, highly successful agriculture, excellent crops of barley, very fair wheat and abundance of vegetables. It rightly deserves its name, Lha-sa or Gods' country.

(vii) It is true that the Himālaya is situated south of Kailāsa and that the Himālayas extend from sea to sea.

(viii) The Himālayas have a much larger number of peaks, though the Purāṇics say that it has about hundred of them. The names of the peaks are not given here, although a few names occur in other chapters elsewhere.

(ix) The inhabitants of the Himālayas are 'Kinnars' (cf. Kinnarā-deśa) and Mahādeva appeared there 'in the garb of a Kirāta.' This indicates people with a lower cultural level dwelling in Himālayan forests, some of which are named as Umā-Vana, Śara-Vana, Krauñca Śaila-Vana, etc. In addition to the forest people there are mentioned innumerable ('hundreds and thousands') āśramas of saints and Ṛṣis in the secluded valleys of this mountain.

(x) The Himālayas are rich in minerals and are the source of 'thousands of streams'. Naturally this means that the Purāṇics here refer to the southern face of the Great Himālayan range.

Besides the six major ranges, discussed so far, there are a few other ranges which form part of the general pattern of the Purāṇic mountain system of Jambū Dwīpa. These are the Gandhamādana and the Mālyavān which lie to the west and east of Meru and separate the Ilavṛta from the Ketumāla and the Bhadravarṣa respectively.

The Gandhamādana and the Mālyavān are ranges the location of which is highly controversial. In fact, there is a confusion in the Purāṇas about all the ranges which immediately surrounded or flank Meru. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa says, 'Meru, then is confined between the mountains Nīla and Niṣadha (on the north and south) and between Mālyavān and Gandhamādana (on the west and east)'.[9] The Gandhamādana is also mentioned in other Purāṇas as one of the southern buttresses of Meru (Matsya), as one of the filament mountains on the west, as a range of boundary mountain on the south, and as a Varṣa mountain of Ketumāla (Vāyu). The position of the Mālyavān is also changed in accordance with the position of the Gandhamādana. The Bhāgavata gives different names to the different parts of Gandhamādana, for instance, the buttress is called Merumandāra, the filament mountain, the Haṁsa, while the term Gandhamādana is restricted to the eastern range.

However, on a close scrutiny of the Purāṇic regional descriptions one comes to the conclusion that by the Gandhamādana the Purāṇics meant the northern ridge of the great Hindūkush arch with its northern extension, the Khwāja Mohammad range. The Hindūkush, as we know, consists of two parallel ranges which come closer to each other at the apex of the arch, south of the Pāmīrs (Meru). These ridges are well-defined in Afghanistan, less so in Kashmir and reappear again as such on the east. The Purāṇics called the northern ridge Gandhamādana and the southern, which is higher and more consistent, Niṣadha, which merged into the Northern Karakoram and Kunlun on the east. The Purāṇic statements that the Gandhamādana is the south, east or west are reconciled if we keep in mind the correct alignment of the northern range of Hindūkush. This range touches the Pāmirs in the south and falls away from it towards southwest and southeast. On the other hand the position of Mālyavān (or Sarikol range) to the east of Meru (Pāmir) is confirmed by statements given in other chapters of the Purāṇas.[10] Variations in its position ((opposite the Gandhamādana) are due to the variations in the position of the Gandhamādana which was not properly interpreted or visualised by subsequent writers.

# CHAPTER IV The River System of the Puranas

CORRESPONDING to the pattern of the major mountain ranges of Jambū Dwīpa, the Purāṇas give an account of its drainage pattern which, too, is arranged symmetrically round the central pivot, the Meru (Pāmīrs). This is bound to be so, since the drainage is naturally guided by the framework of bordering ranges. The Purāṇas, first of all, give an account of the origin of the main rivers which rise in Meru and flow towards the four cardinal points. Then they deal with the course of each of these rivers mentioning the various topographical features which occur in the river's basin from its source to its mouth. Besides these main rivers, the Purāṇas also deal with other rivers and lakes in the various regions of Jambū Dwípa.

To understand the account of rivers and lakes as given in the Purāṇas, it is necessary to keep the following basic Purāṇic notions in mind:

(i) The authors of the Purāṇas believed that rivers originate in lakes, so each river has, in their accounts, invariably a lake visible or invisible (underground) as its source. This lake, in its turn, lies at the foot of a mountain and collects the rain or glacial water which runs down its slopes. Thus, as a rule, according to the Purāṇas, each river has a corresponding lake and an associated mountain.

(ii) The Purāṇas assume that a river can penetrate, through subterranean channels, mountain ranges or minor impediments, which lie athwart its course. As a corollary, the water of a lake could 'filter' through the bounding ridges and give rise to streams on opposite slopes. The Purāṇas imagine and locate subterranean channels where (*a*) a river falls into and ends in a lake which has no visible outlet. If a river rises on the opposite side of a range overlooking the lake, it is supposed that the course of the former river is continued across the range; (*b*) a river flowing through a broad valley enters a narrow gorge, and gives the impression of a decrease in its size and volume. In this case the assumption is that the river has lost some of its waters by sending a branch or branches across the adjoining ridges into the neighbouring valleys. Thus a river could flow in as many as two, three or more channels, separated by intervening ridges.

(iii) A river with all its tributaries is considered by the authors of the Purāṇas as one river. They do not usually give separate names for tributaries while describing the main river. If the Purāṇas want to say that the river B is a tributary of river A, they say that 'the river A falls on the summit of the source mountain of river B'. Conversely, if the Purāṇas say that river A falls on mountain X and then on mountain Y, they want to convey the idea that the river A first receives a tributary from mountain X, then another from mountain Y. Individual tributaries are no doubt mentioned in the Purāṇas but only when they 'in their own right' are associated with any natural or cultural phenomena. For instance, Vetravatī, Śiprā or Kālindī would be mentioned as individual rivers while describing the city of Vidiśā, the Kingdom of Ujjayinī or the land of Śurasenas or Pañcālas with which they are associated—but not as tributaries of the Carmaṇvatī or the Gaṅgā.

It is not necessary that the Purāṇic idea regarding the source river of any river-system should be identical with what we hold today. For instance, the Purāṇas give equal importance to the Vankṣu and Panj as the sources of Oxus or to Bhāgīrathī and Alakanandā as those of the Gaṅgā or to the Yārkand and Kāṣghar rivers of the Tārim. In fact, we were not sure about the sources of the major rivers of the world, even up to the late 19th or early 20th century. Controversies regarding the sources of the Nile, Brahmaputrā, Oxus, etc., are well known.

These three basic 'principles' or notions of the Purāṇas are the 'key' to an understanding of the Purāṇic description of rivers and lakes. Without this, the Purāṇic accounts in many cases become meaningless, incongruous or 'mythical'.

According to the Purāṇas, there are four major rivers which flow from Meru towards north, south, east and west. In the Scriptures also there are four rivers, and we find in Edda, four primeval rivers of milk flowing from the teats of Audhumble. In all these accounts, these rivers are only four branches of the original river, Swargaṅgā or Mandākinī in the Purāṇas. In the Edda also all rivers have their origin from the parent river called Ilvergelmer, but in Scriptures it has no name.

The Purāṇic account of this source river (Swargaṅgā) runs as follows: It rises from under the foot of Viṣṇu, at the polar star, passing through the circle of the moon, it falls upon the summit of Meru, where it divides into four streams flowing towards the four cardinal points. According to the Genesis, the river went forth watering the garden of Eden, and, of course wandering through it, divided itself into four heads. The Purāṇic accounts use the same expression, but in a literal sense, and suppose that these four branches pass actually through four rocks carved into the shape of four heads of various animals. The Gaṅgā running towards the south passes through a cow's head, hence India is called the Land of Cows (cf. Go-vanśas and Go-pālas or simply Pallīs or shepherds). In the west is a horse's head from which flows the Chakṣu; and the inhabitants of the countries bordering on it are of course Aśvas or Turaṅgamas, horses or rather horse-men. Towards the east is the head of an elephant, from which flows the river Sītā. To the north is the lion's head, from which flows the Bhadra-Somā, hence this country is called the country of the Lions, and there is actually a powerful Tartarian tribe there, called the 'Tribe of the Lion'. All the four rivers after running through the various regions of Jambū Dwīpa, fall into their respective oceans.

But before the 'heavenly stream' divides into these four branches, it encircles Meru through seven channels for a space of 84,000 yojanas. After its division, each stream falls from the immense height of Meru into a lake from which it flows towards the ocean and in doing so it 'falls' on various mountains. Thus there are four corresponding lakes, Aruṇodā in the east of Meru, Manasā in the south, Sītodā in the west and Mahābhadrā in the north.

The four rivers mentioned above and their corresponding lakes have been discussed and identified[1] in the following chapters, which deal with the geography of the major regions of Jambū Dwīpa. It may, however, be mentioned that the nomenclature of the rivers has been a source of constant trouble. It is not peculiar to the Purāṇas alone. Even today in certain regions the main channel of a river assumes a different name after every bend. Chitral, Asnar, Yasin, Kunar and Mustaj, for instance, are names given to different parts of the same river. Similarly Tashkurgan, Taghdumbash, Dangubash, Sarikol, Karat-Chukor, Tisnaf, Chiragh Tau and Almaligh are the names of different parts of a single river. In Ladakh the Indus is known by many names, so is the Sutlej. The names Karnālī, Gogra, Śaradā and Kuriali all pertain to one river, and these are in addition to its purely Tibetan names. Where two affluents join, the combined stream is frequently given a name differing from those of either tributary: Gaṅgā is the name given to the river formed by the junction of the Alakanandā and Bhāgirathī, and yet the Purāṇas apply the name Gaṅgā to either of them. Thus, while it is common for a river to be known by many names, it is equally common for the same name to be used for different rivers. The names Sarayū, Rāmagaṅgā, Kālī, Dhaulī, Kosī, Śāradā are all given to more than one Himālayan river; the Great Kālī river, for instance, has the alternative name Śāradā. Dhaulī is the name of a tributary of the Kālī in Kumaon and also of a tributary of Alakanandā. Kizil Sū is the name of two rivers flowing in opposite directions from a pass in the Alai valley. In this respect, the name Gaṅgā is perhaps the most common of all. It has been given ever since ancient times to many large rivers particularly to those which have been considered sacred. In Bhāratavarṣa alone we have the Pen-Gaṅgā, Waingaṅgā, Rāmagaṅgā, Kṛṣnagaṅgā, Viṣṇugaṅgā and a number of other 'Gaṅgās which we can easily locate on any modern map. The Gaṅgā of the Purāṇas may be easily taken to denote any river of the Seven Dwīpas which is as big, and as beneficial as the Gaṅgā proper.

The nomenclature of the source river of the Purāṇas needs clarification. The Gaṅgā has the same relation to the river-systems of the world as Meru has to its mountain ranges. In an earlier paragraph we have given the Purāṇic concept of this river. Let us analyse that statement.

The Gaṅgā is a celestial river which has been very picturesquely compared in the Purāṇas to the Milky Way. The first part of the statement, therefore, refers to the 'Starry River' in the heavens (i.e., the Milky Way) which one sees revolving round the North Pole in the Northern Hemisphere, as though it were attached to the Pole by an invisible bond. The 'abode' of this celestial river (in the literal sense) on the earth is the extensive, snow-bound and glacier-mantled high plateau of the Pāmīr (the Meru) on which that river, i.e. the Gaṅga 'descends' from the sky, obviously in the form of snow. The 'Gaṅgā' thus remains suspended on this mountainous region above the snow-line or, in Purāṇic language, rests on the head or in the tresses of gods and dieties. Not only does the 'heavenly river' rest on the plateau of Meru but also on the high ridges and ranges which surround and radiate from the Meru or the Pāmīr region. Thus the 'river' runs several times 'round Meru', according to the Purāṇas, before it descends further down by melting or as a glacier. It should be noted that at this stage, i.e. before melting, the Gaṅgā rests or remains suspended on the high mountain peaks and ridges and does not flow into valleys or plains. When the glaciers melt and their water accumulates in the lakes at the foot of the mountain and issue from there as rivers, the Gaṅgā assumes the form of water channels—i.e., rivers in the real sense. The Purāṇas mention four main lakes and four main rivers which originate as such and flow to the four cardinal points of Jambū Dwīpa.

It will be realised from the above discussion that the Purāṇas intend to bring out three stages in the evolution of the Gaṅgā:

(i) They connect it with the heavens by comparing and identifying it with the Milky Way. This is its celestial stage.

(ii) As the snow falls on the high mountains they identify it with the snow cap of High Asia which covers its high ranges and its central knot, the Pāmīrs. Gaṅgā is just a cover or belt of snow and ice at this stage. This is the Gaṅgā at its 'snowy' stage.

(iii) From this common source, i.e. the Pāmīrs, the snowy Gaṅgā melts and divides into the four main rivers of Asia which radiate in different directions. The Gaṅgā at this stage becomes a stream or rather four streams of water. The Purāṇas have thus rolled the accounts of the glaciers of Asia, the rivers of Asia and their origin into one, in a simple but colourful statement, which is repeated practically in all the Purāṇas.

The Purāṇas realised the extent of Meru and its extensive snow cover, hence they gave it great importance, as is evidenced in their detailed account of Meru, but they also visualised the extension of the snow-cap towards the south along the high Himālayan ranges, hence their Gaṅgā (i.e., the Snowy Gaṅgā) sprawled far to the south and southeast of Meru on the summits of the Himālayan and Trans-Himālayan ranges. They, therefore, consider that all rivers which originate in the snows of the Himālayas, are the manifestation of the Holy Gaṅgā. It is no wonder that the various 'Gaṅgās', Indian and extra-Indian, for instance, the Mahā-Gaṅgā (Hwangho), Gaṅgā (Ganges), Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, Viṣṇugaṅgā, Kāligaṅga, Gaurīgaṅgā, Dhaulīgaṅgā, etc., have been so named because they all derive their waters from the common source—i.e., the Snowy Gaṅgā of the Purāṇas. The Vāyu Purāṇa (as well as other Purāṇas), very clearly refer to this phase of the sacred river when they say:

> This river (Gaṅgā) after passing through thousands of mountains, irrigates hundreds of valleys and passes through thousands of forests and hundreds of caves. It then falls into the Southern Sea.
>
> The beautiful river which is one yojana in breadth and is so surrounded with mountain peaks, which was borne by Mahātmā Śankara on his head, and which purifies even the greatest sinners, that river is Gaṅgā.
>
> This river flows from all sides of Himālayan mountains and is divided into several branches which are known by various names (Ch. 42, 35-38).

Besides the account of the four major rivers[2] and lakes mentioned above, the Purāṇas bring in the names of various other lakes and rivers in other chapters or in different contexts. In Vāyu Purāṇa these chapters are:

(a) The descriptions or regional accounts of Ketumāla, Bhadrāśva, Uttara Kuru and Bhāratavarṣa.[3] These regions have been discussed in the following chapters,[4] and wherever possible suggestions have been made for their identification. In the case of Bhāratavarṣa the Bhāgawata mentions, besides the Gaṅgā, 42 other rivers; the Vāyu, 93; the Matsya, 90; the Viṣṇu, 17; and the Mārkaṇḍeya, 90. The lists of the Vāyu, Matsya and Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇas are practically identical.[5]

Fig. 4

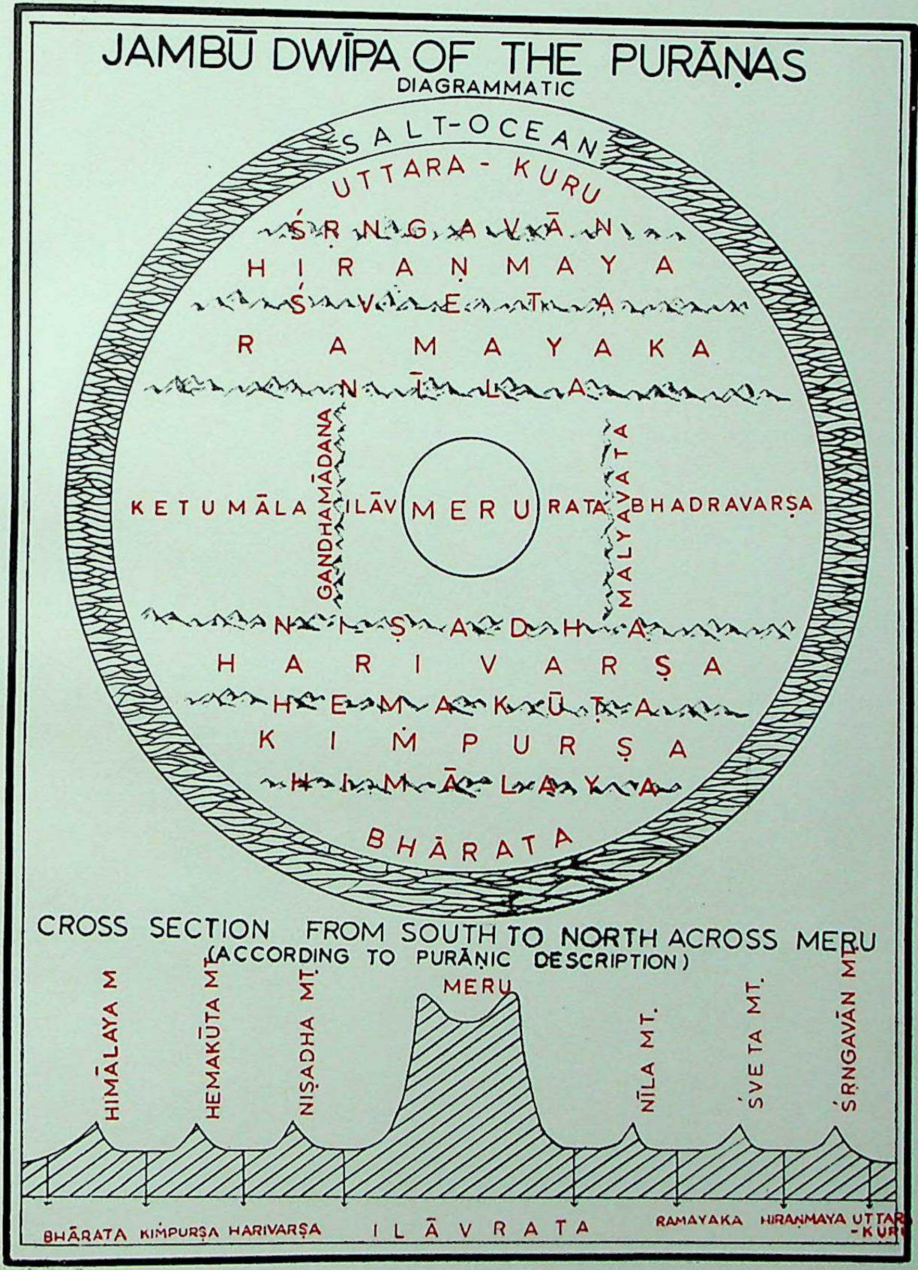

JAMBŪ DWĪPA OF THE PURĀṆAS
DIAGRAMMATIC
SALT-OCEAN
UTTARA-KURU
ŚṚNGAVĀN
HIRAṆMAYA
ŚVETA
RAMAYAKA
NĪLA
GANDHAMĀDANA
MALYAVATA
KETUMĀLA
ILĀV
MERU
RATA
BHADRAVARṢA
NIṢADHA
HARIVARṢA
HEMAKŪṬA
KIMPURṢA
HIMĀLAYA
BHĀRATA
CROSS SECTION FROM SOUTH TO NORTH ACROSS MERU
(ACCORDING TO PURĀṆIC DESCRIPTION)
HIMĀLAYA M
HEMAKŪTA MT
NIṢADHA MT.
MERU
NĪLA MT.
ŚVE TA MT.
ŚṚNGAVĀN MT.
BHĀRATA
KIṀPURṢA
HARIVARṢA
ILĀVRATA
RAMAYAKA
HIRAṆMAYA
UTTAR
-KUR

Fig. 5

HIMALAYAN AND TRANS-HIMALAYAN PEAKS
OF THE
FIFTH & HIGHER MAGNITUDES

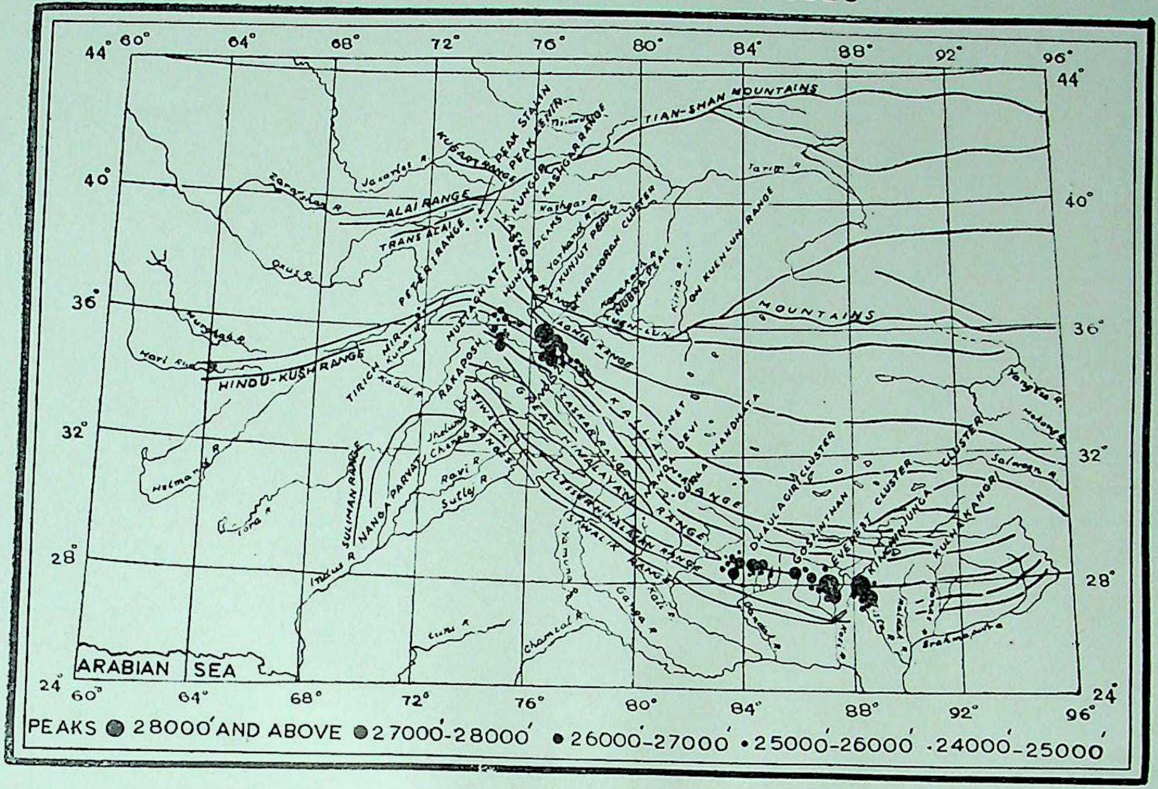

44°
60°
64°
68°
72°
76°
80°
84°
88°
92°
96°
40°
36°
32°
28°
24°
TIAN-SHAN MOUNTAINS
PEAK STALIN
PEAK LENIN
KUBART RANGE
KASHGAR RANGE
Jaxartes R
Zarafshan R
ALAI RANGE
TRANS ALAI
PETER I RANGE
KUNGUR
Kashgar R
Tarim R
Oxus R
Yarkand R
KUNJUT PEAKS
KARAKORAN CLUSTER
NUBRA PEAK
Kiria R
KUEN LUN RANGE
MOUNTAINS
MUZTAGH ATA
HUNZA
AGHIL RANGE
KUEN-LUN
Hari Rud
Murghab R
HINDU-KUSH RANGE
TIRICH MIR
Kunar R
Kabul R
RAKAPOSH
GREAT HIMALAYAN RANGE
ZASKAR RANGE
KAILAS RANGE
SIWALIK RANGES
KAMET
NANDA DEVI
GURLA MANDHATA
DHAULAGIRI CLUSTER
GOSAINTHAN
EVEREST CLUSTER
KINCHINJUNGA CLUSTER
KULHA KANGRI
Yangtse R
Mekong R
Salween R
Helmand R
Lora R
SULIMAN RANGE
NANGA PARVAT
Jhelum R
Chenab R
Ravi R
Sutlej R
Indus R
LESSER HIMALAYAN RANGE
SIWALIK RANGE
Jamuna R
Ganga R
Kali R
Gandak R
Kosi R
Chambal R
Luni R
Brahmaputra
ARABIAN SEA
PEAKS ● 28000′ AND ABOVE ● 27000′-28000′ • 26000′-27000′ • 25000′-26000′ · 24000′-25000′

Fig. 6

## JAMBŪ - DWĪPA

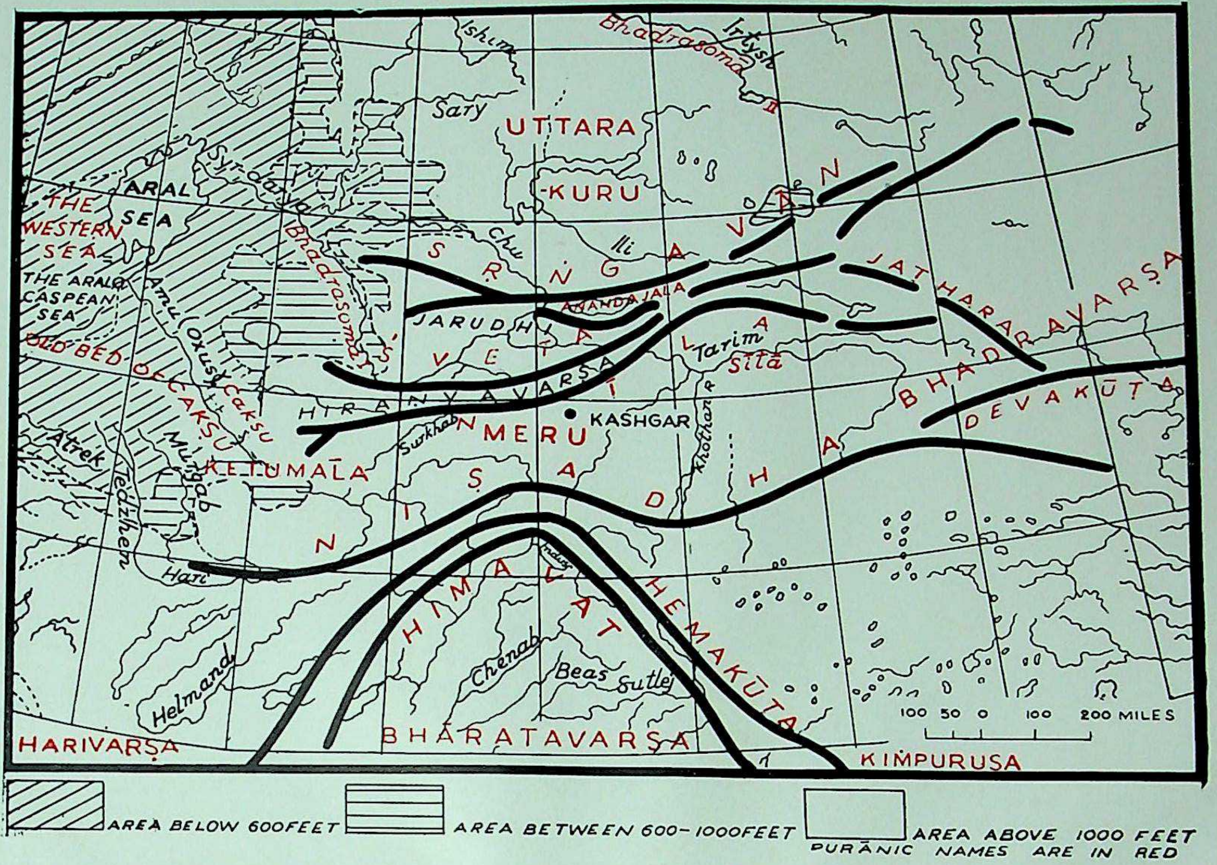
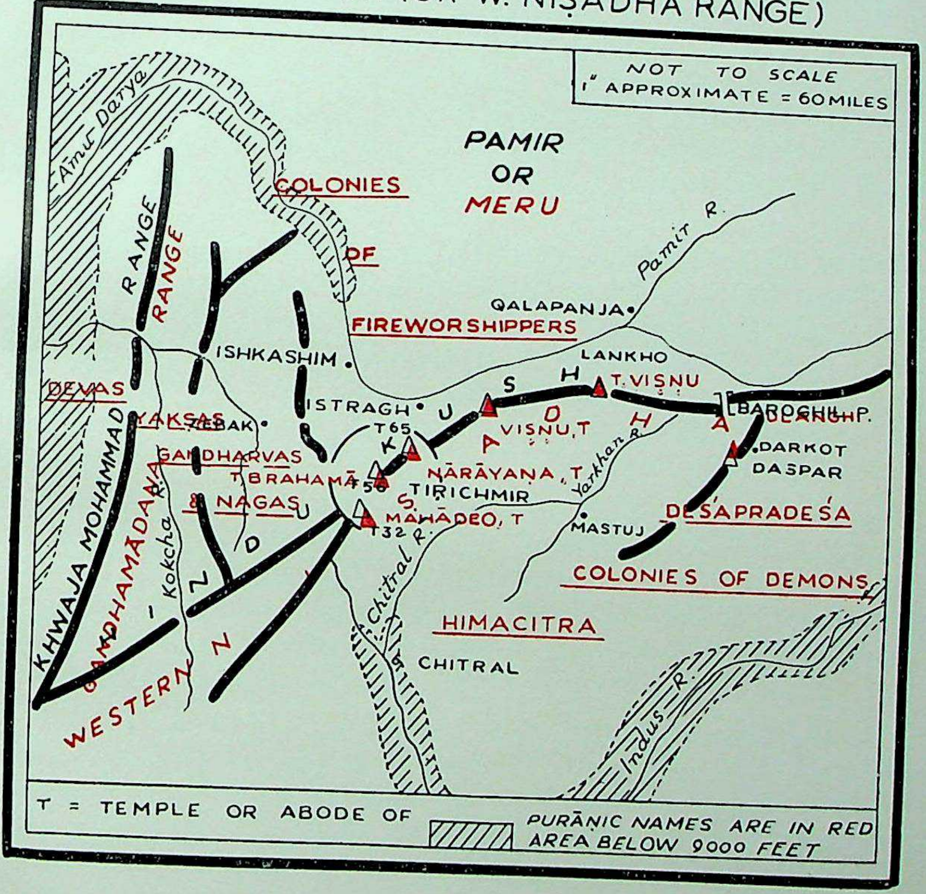

THE WESTERN SEA
ARAL SEA
THE ARAL & CASPIAN SEA
OLD BED OF CAKSU
Atrek
Tedzhen
Amu
Oxus
Caksu
Murgab
Hari
Syr-daria
Bhadrasomā
Ishim
Irtysh
Sary
Chu
Ili
UTTARA-KURU
ŚṚṄGAVĀN
JARUDHI
ĀNANDAJALA
ŚVETA
HIRAṆYAVARṢA
NĪLA
Tarim
Sītā
JATHARA
BHADRĀVARṢA
DEVAKŪṬA
KETUMĀLA
Surkhab
MERU
KASHGAR
Khothan R
NIṢADHA
Indus
HIMAVAT
HEMAKŪṬA
Chenab
Beas
Sutlej
Helmand
HARIVARṢA
BHĀRATAVARṢA
KIMPURUṢA
100 50 0 100 200 MILES
AREA BELOW 600FEET
AREA BETWEEN 600–1000FEET
AREA ABOVE 1000 FEET
PURĀNIC NAMES ARE IN RED

Fig. 7

SKETCH
OF
HINDUKUSH (OR W. NIṢADHA RANGE)


NOT TO SCALE
1" APPROXIMATE = 60 MILES
PAMIR
OR
MERU
COLONIES
OF
FIREWORSHIPPERS
Āmu Darya
RANGE
RANGE
Pamir R.
QALAPANJA
ISHKASHIM
LANKHO
T. VIṢNU
DEVAS
ISTRAGH
T65
YAKṢAS
ZEBAK
S
H
U
K
D
H
A
A
VIṢNU, T
BAROGHIL P.
DARKOT
DASPAR
GANDHARVAS
T. BRAHAMĀ
T56
NĀRĀYAṆA, T
TIRICHMIR
& NAGAS
S
MAHĀDEO, T
T32
Yarkhan R.
MASTUJ
DEŚAPRADEŚA
COLONIES OF DEMONS
KHWAJA MOHAMMAD
GANDHAMĀDANA
Kokcha R.
U
D
N
I
H
N
WESTERN
Chitral R.
HIMACITRA
CHITRAL
Indus R.
T = TEMPLE OR ABODE OF
PURĀṆIC NAMES ARE IN RED
AREA BELOW 9000 FEET

The Vāyu Purāṇa[6] also gives a list of 43 rivers in Bhadrāśva (the basin of the Tārim and N. China) including the river Sītā (Tārim-Hwangho) and another list of 43 rivers in Ketumāla (the basin of the Oxus) including the Oxus. These appear to be fairly comprehensive lists. But in the case of Uttara Kuru only half a dozen major rivers are mentioned, revealing the Purāṇic writers' lack of interest in the northern regions of Asia.

(b) The description of the Trans-Himālaya lakes and rivers under the title 'Gaṅgā-Avtāra Varṇana' occurs in chapter 47 of the Vāyu Purāṇa. Chapter 121 of the Matsya Purāṇa is practically identical with this chapter of the Vāyu; there are only a few minor variations, rather omissions, here and there.

The salient facts given in this chapter which are detailed below and summarised in a table (see p. 70) show the intimate and fairly accurate knowledge which the authors of the Purāṇas had, regarding these little known regions which remained unexplored till the beginning of the 20th century.

The 'Gaṅgā-Avtāra Varṇana' in the opening paragraph fixes the position of Mount Kailāsa north of the Himālaya on the Hemakūṭa (modern Kailāsa) range. The position of other mountains, rivers and lakes in the Trans-Himālayan region is then given with reference to this focal point (i.e., Mt. Kailāsa). This is logical, since, in the absence of latitudes and longitudes, reference to a fixed known point is absolutely necessary for locating the features around it.

'Cold and fresh' water from the springs of the Kailāsa mountain flows into a lake (name not given) from which issues the R. Mandākinī, around which stands the picturesque 'Nandan forest of vast dimensions'. The R. Mandākinī probably refers to the river Umā and the Zhong Chhu, which flow through Gaurī Kuṇḍa (lying on the eastern flank of Mount Kailāsa) into the Rākṣasa Tal (the twin lake of Mānasarovar).

North-east of Kailāsa, the Purāṇas locate a mountain named Candraprabha, near which is a lake, called Acchodā. From it rises the R. Acchodā, on whose banks 'the sacred Caitraratha forest' is situated. This river too flows into another lake. This mountain appears to be the Surange La (another range of the Kailāsa region to its north-east), from which a number of streams and their tributaries discharge their waters into L. Kongys Tso (also called L. Gounche). The fact that Manibhadra, a general of Yakṣas, lives there with his retenue of Guhyakas, refers to the ancient settlement of Thokchan which is still an important centre of this region.

The Pishang mountain located north-east of Kailāsa is evidently the Patchoung mountain shown on the Ta-Ching map by Dutrevil de Rhins

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

near the source of the Indus (Senge Khambob of the Tibetans), about 35 miles north-east of Mount Kailāsa.

The Lohita-Hemasṛṅga (of Vāyu and Sarvoṣadha of Matsya) below which is lake Lohita, from which the river Lauhita rises and which lies opposite Mt. Candraprabha is clearly the Kanglung Kangri (another range of the Kailāsa region to its south-east) from which, according to Swāmī Praṇavānanda[7] rises the Brahmaputrā (or Chema Yung-drung). This source river first enters a small lake (Lohita of the Purāṇas) and then enters Tamchok Khambah, the headwater of the Brahmaputrā. The Matsya Purāṇa on the other hand most probably refers to Tamulung Tso as the source of the river Lauhita.

The Kursatviṣadha mountain which lies to the south of the Kailāsa and the associated Vaidyut mountain are evidently the Gurlā Māndhātā peaks. According to the Purāṇas, Lake Mānasarovar lies below the latter and R. Sarayū rises from it. Both these pointers confirm the identification of these mountains with Gurlā Māndhātā, since Lake Mānasarovar lies below their northern face and River Karnālī (Map Chhu of the Tibetans), which is a major tributary of R. Sarayū, rises from its southern and western faces.

The Aruṇa-Śṛngavān mountains, according to the Matsya, lie to the west of Kailāsa ('on the other side of Kailāsa' according to Vāyu). They are full of herbs, precious stones and metals and contain hundreds of groups of peaks dominated by the biggest of all mountains where Dhūmralohita, the 'King of Mountains' resides. Lake Śailoda lies at its foot from which a river rises and flows west between the Chakṣu and Sītā rivers into the salt ocean (Western Sea according to Matsya). The mountain to the west of Kailāsa and containing hundreds of high peaks must be the famous Ladakh or Leh range which is the principal feature of Ladakh and carries many peaks above 19,000 feet. This is the Aruṇa range of the Purāṇas and the Dhūmralohita, which lies near the Aruṇa and dominates the whole of the surrounding area, is the Naṅgā Parbāt. The grandeur of Naṅgā Parbāt and its significance as the 'King of Mountains' can be visualised from the following statement by Col. Tanner:

> Naṅgā Parbāt's summit is 26620 feet, a.s.l. and its base stands on the left side of the Indus valley, which at that point is but 3500 feet; it therefore exposes 23120 feet of its side to an observer, who standing as near as he may dare to the edge of perhaps the most lofty cliff of the world with the Indus valley 12000 feet below him, may regard at the distance of less than 40 miles, the unparalleld view presented by the vast snow fields, glaciers and crags of this King of Mountains.[7]

The Naṅgā Parbāt is the Everest of the Western Himālayas[8]. Though it is lower than the Everest, it is much more prominent than the latter.

Within a radius of 120 miles Naṅgā Parbāt surpasses all other summits by more than 9,000 feet, while the Everest is surrounded by a cluster of peaks which hide its immense height. As a detached peak it is the first to catch the early Sun's rays in the morning and the last to do so in the evening. Its snowy peaks therefore appear twice a day as a huge mass of red flame against a dull sky. It is a scene that is not grasped or taken in at once, but after a while the stupendous grandeur of the view is appreciated. It is quite overwhelming in magnitude: it is in fact one of the finest spectacles that Nature offers to the gaze of man. It is no wonder that the Purāṇas sum up the scene by associating it with the term Dhūmralohita or red or fiery smoke.

The lake Śailodaya appears to be the Wular lake, which was formerly a big lake practically covering the whole of the Kashmir Valley. The R. Jhelum or R. Śiloda of the Purāṇas still flows through it and it runs towards the west between the Indus and the Sutlej—the Chakṣu and the Sītā of the Purāṇas.[9]

To the north of Kailāsa, the Purāṇas say, lies a golden-peaked range, rich in red orpiment (*harital*) below which lies the famous Vindu-Sarovara from which three rivers flow to the east, three to the west and one to the south. They are named as Nalinī, Hrādinī (or Hlādinī) and Pavanī in the east; Sītā, Chakṣu and Sindhu in the west and Bhāgīrathī in the south. This sacred lake is associated with the name of King Bhagīratha who by penance released the Southern River from the wrath of Lord Śiva. The relevant paragraphs from the Vāyu Purāṇa which deal with these features are quoted below:

> From the Kailāsa Mountain towards the north there is a mountain full of living beings and beneficial herbs. Its name is the Gaura mountain. There is also a divine mountain full of diamonds called the Hiraṇya Śṛṅga (23).
>
> At the foot of that mountain, there is extremely sacred, excellent sand of gold, and there is also a beautiful lake named 'Vindu'. Here came Bhagīratha, who for the sake of the Gaṅgā, lived there for a number of years (24-25). There the goddess Tripathagā or the Gaṅgā was first initiated. Emerging from the foot of the Soma mountain, that river divided itself into seven currents (26). There are found 'Yūpa', diamonds, gold, etc. (27). In the clear sky, the innumerable stars (of the Milky Way) which look very close to each other and shine brightly in the night, are nothing but the goddess Tripathagā or the Gaṅgā (28). This Tripathagā, having flowed in the sky, came down upon the earth, and being checked by the Lord Śankara's yoga, she fell down upon the head of Lord Śankara (29).

The few drops which fell upon the earth as a result of the anger of Lord Śankara created there the lake called 'Vindu'. Therefore it is now known as 'Vindu Sarovara' (30).

Then having been checked by Lord Śankara, that river Tripathagā began to brood over her imprisonment by him (31). She felt like piercing the lower regions of the earth to reappear on its surface and circumvent Lord Śankara (32-33). Lord Śankara having come to know the evil design of Devī Gaṅgā, lifted and kept the entire mighty river over his own head. He then angrily threw her down with great force upon the earth.

At the same time, Lord Śankara saw that King Bhagīratha had grown pale and thin on account of hunger and thirst, because of his love for his river. Lord Śankara who was pleased with the King, took pity on him and changed His anger to a boon (34). Having realised the strong desire of King Bhagīratha, the Tripathagā started flowing (35). And the current of that river divided itself into seven streams. Three of them went towards the east and three towards the west (36). In this way the entire course of the river Gaṅgā divided into seven parts. Nalinī, Hrādīnī and Pavanī, went towards the east, Sītā, Chakṣu, Sindhu went towards the west. The seventh current of them, went towards the south under the name of Bhāgīrathī (37). This Bhāgīrathī entered the Lavana Sea. But all these offer devotion to Himādrī Varṣa (40).[10]

The above statement virtually repeats and supplements the Purāṇic notions regarding the Gaṅgā which have been discussed earlier in this chapter. It refers again to the celestial Gaṅgā, the snowy or glacial Gaṅgā and the fluvial Gaṅgā which included all the streams emanating from the snowy Gaṅgā. The statement may be translated as follows:

(i) The snow-belt from the Pāmīrs (Meru) which runs towards the south covers the Northern Himālayan region including the Karakoram massif. So far it had remained one continuous broad belt of ice and snow. As it moved further towards the south—somewhere north of Kailāsa—it divided itself into three comparatively narrower belts, each covering a distinct high range which runs across Tibet from north-west to east-south-east. These ranges are, Tanglha, Aling Kangri and Nychenthangla which correspond to the Gaura, Hiraṇya Śṛṅga and Soma[11] of the Purāṇas.

(ii) In the distant past, to which period the Purāṇic tradition goes, the basin between the Aling Kangri and the Nychenthangla was a big snowfield (probably during a glacial pulse) i.e., a 'lake' full of 'particles of frozen water'—a 'Vindu Sarovar' in the literal sense. In Purāṇic terminology, 'the goddess Tripathagā was confined in the tresses of Lord Śankara' since it was unable to move forward on account of glacial conditions and flow beyond the confines of these high mountains.

(iii) In the post-glacial period which followed, the snow-field melted and so did the glaciers on the three ranges mentioned above, i.e., on the three prongs of the Gaṅgā, named collectively as Tripathagā by the Purāṇas. The waters of the snow-field naturally found their way out of the confines of the bounding ranges. This event is expressed by the Purāṇas as the 'release' by the Lord of the goddess Tripathagā on account of King Bhagīratha's entreaties and penance.

There can be two explanations of this description of the mysterious lake and both of them flow from the literal meaning of the words 'Vindu Sarovara'—a collection of drops of water. Either it signifies a large snow-field, i.e., a basin full of snow (or in other words a 'lake' of 'frozen particles of water' or snow) or it refers to a large basin full of innumerable tiny lakes. If the former is correct then the golden-peaked mountain is the great Aling-Kangri range, which was probably known to the authors of the Purāṇas, and the Vindu-Sarovara refers to extensive snow-fields which probably in the past filled the basin between the Aling-Kangri and Kailāsa-Tanglha range. If the latter is correct, then the locations of Aling-Kangri and Kailāsa Tanglha remain the same and in place of the snow-field we have, as at present, the same basin dotted with innumerable small and large lakes between the two ranges mentioned above. In either case the Vindu-Sarovara of the Purāṇas coincides with the basin referred to above.

(iv) The waters from the Vindu Sarovara not only flowed to the east, west and south through visible outlets but also through subterranean channels, which according to the Purāṇas were legitimate outlets foi enclosed water sheets.

(v) The three rivers which flowed to the east according to the Purāṇas and which still flow in the same direction are the Yangtse, Mekong and Salween rivers and those which flow towards the west are the Indus, the Shyok and the Yarkand. The southern river Bhāgīrathī is still known by its Purāṇic name. The identity of the eastern rivers is supported by the fact that they are mentioned as flowing through Indradwīpa (Burma) while there is little doubt regarding the western and southern rivers.

The chapter, 'Gaṅgā Avtāra Varṇana' of the Vāyu Purāṇa, referred to above, presents miscellaneous information regarding the lakes and rivers on other mountains, i.e., the Hemakūṭa, Niṣadha, Meru, Nīla and Śweta. It is significant that all these lakes are glacial lakes situated on high mountains whose snow-covered summits radiate from Meru in all directions, i.e., they have been imagined as mere offshoots of the central reservoir of ice—the 'Snowy Gaṅgā'—on it descent on Meru. The lakes and associated rivers mentioned under this head are detailed in a tabular form below.

TABLE SHOWING THE HIGH LAKES (of the Purāṇas) NORTH OF HEMAKŪṬA
(According to Vāyu & Matsya)

| *Mountain* | *Lake* | *Rivers issuing from it* | *Other details* | *Variations in Matsya Purāṇa* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hemaśṛṅga | L. Śayanā (back of Hemakūṭa) | R. Manaswinī<br>R. Jyotiṣmatī | Both enter the Western Sea | Lake Nāga or Lake of Snakes in places of Śayanā. R. Saraswatī in place of River Manaswanī |
| Niṣadha | L. Viṣṇupada | R. Gandharvī & R. Nānwalī | | Both lakes, a favourate resort of the Gandharvas. River Gandharvī not mentioned |
| Meru | L. Candraprabhā (beyond Meru) | R. Jambū | Pious river gold bed | The source of the lake is in Meru |
| Nīla | L. Payodā | R. Puṇḍarīkā<br>R. Payodā | Lotus-like lake | One of the twin lakes Payodā and Puṇḍarikā is called Uttara Mānasā. River Mṛgyā and R. Mṛgakāntā issue from them. |
| Śweta | L. Uttarmānasa<br>L. Madhuwat-sarovara | R. Jyotsnā<br>R. Mṛgakāntā | Pious lake<br>Honey-like Kalpa trees, also known as Rudrakānta | Neither the position of these lakes nor their significance mentioned |
| Kuru country | L. Rudra<br>L. Jaya<br>12 more lakes | R. Śāntā<br>R. Mādhavī | | 12 lakes under the name Vaijayā full of lotuses. R. Śāntī and R. Mādhavī flow from them |

North of the Hemakūṭa (Kailāsa) range there are numerous lakes so that the whole region is called the lake region of Tibet. But all the lakes in the north-east and east of this region receive the drainage of the surrounding area. There are, however, a few high lakes in the west (north of Hemakūṭa) from which rivers rise and flow towards the west. We should, therefore, look for the 'lake behind Hemaśṛṅga' in that area. In all probability the Lake Sayanā or Nāga of the Purāṇas is the Lake 'Nak Tso' which with Pangong Tso forms an extensive water-sheet. From this water-sheet rise a few small streams which join the Shyok at its south-eastern bend and their combined waters flow towards the 'Western Sea'.

Meru is the abode of Viṣṇu and Niṣadha is the east-west range adjoining it in the south. Therefore we must look for L. Viṣṇupāda (lake at the foot of the abode of Viṣṇu) somewhere in the Wakhan region where the Meru and Niṣadha come closest to each other. The lake is evidently Lake Chakmaktin in modern maps from which rises the Wakhan river flowing west through the land of the Gandharvas.

Similarly we must look for the Uttara Mānasa lake where Meru meets the northern east-west range, i.e., the Nīla. A glance at any modern map of the Pāmīrs will show that the Uttara Mānasa lake (or rather the Twin Lake resembling the twin lakes of Dakṣiṇa Mānasa) is certainly the Kara Kul of northern Pāmīrs. The Kara Kul in fact consists of two lakes named as Payodā and Puṇḍarīka in the Purāṇas, adjoining each other just like the Mānsarovara and Rakṣasa Tāla of the Kailāsa region. Although the basin of these lakes is that of inland drainage (like that of Mānsarovara lakes), the Purāṇas extend the source of the rivers Maksu and Markuṣ to these lakes. They assert that the rivers Mṛgayā and Mṛgakāntyā rise from it.

L. Madhuvat Sarovara on the Śweta mountain is associated with the Madhumān mountain mentioned in the Purāṇas in connection with the Oxus basin (discussed in detail in the following chapter[12]). The lake is clearly the picturesque, mirror-like Iskander Kul glistening like a pearl from which rises the Iskandar Daryā.

> Like most of the mountain lakes in Tājikistān, this beautiful lake was formed as a result of a gigantic blocking up. In area and capacity it is not very large—its surface covers only three and a half square kilometres, and its depth does not exceed seventy-two metres. The wonderful thing about it is its gigantic power; in the course of a year it hurls down nearly 800 million cubic metres of water. It obtains this power from glaciers and snow on the mountains which tower above it.[13]

The main feature of the neighbouring mountains and valleys is the mulberry tree from which the Tājiks prepare Bekmes, a sweet syrup-like honey crushed from fresh mulberry berries. In fact, this area is the 'honey' (Sk. Madhu) region of Tājikistān.

The Purāṇas also mention, though cursorily, the lakes of the northern Siberian plains (i.e., of Uttara Kuru). There are twelve of these lakes, some of which according to them are like oceans. The natural inference is that the authors of the Purāṇas had an idea of the big northern lakes, i.e., the Balkhash and the Baikal, to which they give the common name 'Vaijaya.' Most probably their 'Vaijaya' was the Baikal of modern times. Further details of those regions need not detain us here since they will be discussed in the relevant chapters which follow.

# CHAPTER V

# Regions of Jambu Dwipa: Northern Regions (Ramanaka, Hiranmaya and Uttara Kuru)

THE Purāṇic description of these regions is rather sketchy as compared with the descriptions of the western, eastern and southern regions of Jambū Dwīpa. The best geographical account given in the Purāṇas is naturally that of Bhārata. In the case of Ketumāla and Bhadravarṣa, full details of the mountainous region and some information about the streams and provinces of the Bhadravarṣa proper[1] (i.e., the Hwang-Ho basin or North China) and Ketumāla (i.e., the Oxus basin)[2] are given. For the northern regions there is a list of mountains situated to the north of Meru, a brief, rather very brief, account of two or three intermountainous regions and a paragraph on the course of the Northern River. But even this sketchy description is so precise that it is not difficult to identify the topographical features of this region satisfactorily on a modern map in spite of lack of sufficient data or geographical facts in the Purāṇas.

As mentioned earlier, the Purāṇas name three latitudinal ranges north of Meru (Pāmīrs)—i.e., the Nīla, the longest and nearest to Meru; the Śveta, slightly shorter than the Nīla and further north; the Sṛṅgavān, the shortest and farthest to the north. They have been identified in an earlier chapter as follows:

Nīla[3]—Zarafshan, Trans Alai, Kokshal Tau, Tien Shan ranges.

Śveta[4]—Nura Tau, Turkistan, Alai, Atbashi, Akshai, Irak ranges.

Sṛṅgavān[5]—Kara Tau, Kirghiz, Zailai, Ala Tau, Ketman ranges.

Between these ranges and the Northern Ocean (the Arctic) lie the following regions: Ramyaka or Ramaṇaka[6] Varṣa (between the Nīla and the Śveta); Hiraṇmaya or Hiraṇyaka Varṣa[7] (between the Śveta and the Sṛṅgavān) and Uttara Kuru or Śṛṅgāsaka[8] (between the Sṛṅgavān and the Northern Ocean—the Arctic) (see Fig. 8).

Conforming to the general pattern followed by many Purāṇas, the Vāyu Purāṇa describes the geography of these regions under five heads:

(i) The mountains north of Mahābhadra, the Northern Lake (ch. 36);

(ii) The description of valleys or basins between the Northern Ranges (ch. 38);

(iii) Delightful places (or in other words, the inhabited regions) on (or in the vicinity of) the Northern Mountains (ch. 39);

(iv) The course of the Northern River, Bhadrasomā (ch. 42);

(v) A generalised account of the Northern Regions (ch. 45).

Besides these, there are:

(vi) Incidental remarks regarding the Northern Regions in other chapters.

The relevant descriptions in the Vāyu Purāṇa under these heads are quoted below:

(a) The ranges which are located north of Mahābhadra Sarovara (the Northern Lake) which I have already discussed are in the following order:

Mahā Śaila, Śankakūṭa, Vṛṣabha, Hansaparvata, Nāga, Kapila, Sanumana,[9] Indra Śaila, Nīla, Kanaka Śṛṅga, Sat Śṛṅga, Puṣpaka, Meghaśaila, Acalottamavirāja and Śailendra Jarudhi. The names of many mountains which are located in the north are mentioned (ch. 36, 30-32).

(b) There is a Paraśakasthalī between the Śankakūṭa and the Vṛṣabha mountains. Big, aromatic, luscious fruits fall on the ground and make it muddy. Respectable Charanganas drink the juice of 'Paruṣa' and get intoxicated. Kinnaras, Uragas and Saints live on that land.

There is a region two hundred yojanas long and one hundred yojanas in breadth located between the Kapiñjala and Nāgaśaila mountains. It is full of forests containing different varieties of fruit and flowers. Here Kinnaras and Uragas reside. There are beautiful 'Drākṣāvana', 'Nāgavana', 'Kharjūravana', 'Nīla', 'Aśokavana', 'Kadalīvana', tasty pomegranate 'vana', 'Akhrote vana', 'Atasī Tilaka-vana', and beautiful 'Badarīvana'. That land is also drained by fresh and cool water rivers.

There is a land, one hundred yojanas in breadth and sixty yojanas in length between the Puṣpaka and Mahā Megha mountains. It is level and hard like palm and is devoid of trees, creepers, grasses, etc., and not a single creature lives in it. That land which is extremely dangerous and terrifying, bears the name Kānanasthalī.

Beyond, there are large lakes, tall trees and powerful men. Besides innumerable small lakes, forests and lands, there are innumerable important lands, valleys and lakes which are seven, eight, ten and twelve yojanas long. The region has a large number of dark caves and valleys which the sun's rays never penetrate. For this reason they are always cold and inaccessible. Brahmins, there are thousands of lakes in the interior of mountains. The water of these lakes is always boiling (ch. 41, 66-73).

(c) On the several peaks of the Jarudhi mountain in the North Country where saints reside there are thousands of cities inhabited by Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, Nāgas and Demons. On the central peak of that mountain decorated with beautiful jewels and served by Siddhas and Devarṣis, there is a lake named Ānanda-Jala containing the most sacred water. Its water is always crystal clear. Saints bathe in it. It is full of many creatures and the most beautiful birds. Swans and ducks have their home there. There are beautiful ghats beautified by lotuses and lilies. The lotuses are of blue colour. It is thirty yojanas in diameter. A dangerous Nāgapati named Chandra who resides there has a hundred heads with Viṣṇu's marks on its body (ch. 41, 66-73).

(d) The above-mentioned river (the Northern River) after emerging by the side of Merukūṭa in the north of Supārśva mountains flows through the northern region of the Meru mountain.... From there the river falls and throws cascades of water like garlands. Served by Devas it descends several mountain slopes and flows through rich countries and after crossing large and several great forests including Sūryavana and Mahāvana this great river falls into lake Mahābhadra (Mahāpuṇya). After emerging from it, the great sacred river is known as the Bhadrasomā. The Bhadrasomā river is a very large and fast moving river. This river, after innumerable waterfalls in the lower part of the Śankhakūṭa mountain flows by the side of the same (Śankhakūṭa) mountain. From there it proceeds to Nāgaśaila, whence it falls on the great mountain Varṣaparvata Nīla. From there the river falls on the Kapiñjala, passes on to Indraśaila and then makes for the Mahānīla, Hemaśṛṅga mountains. It continues its journey from Hemaśṛṅga to Śveta, to Sunāga, and then to Ṣaṭ Śṛṅga. From Ṣaṭ Śṛṅga, the river falls on the flower-carpeted great mountain Puṣkara, then passes on to Dvirāja and from there to the Varāha mountain and to Mayūra. It then falls on the peak of the Jarudhi mountain which has numerous caves. In this way, this great river, after crossing thousands of mountains falls on the Saṁyukta Tṛśṛṅga peak named the Maryāda mountain. After this, the river travels from the base of the Tṛśṛṅga and helped by the wind it leaves the side of the Merukūṭa mountain. Then this clear water river falls on the Jarudhi mountain and after crossing that mountain it falls in the Western Sea.[10]

On the northern side of Meru in the Supārśva country this river is split into branches before falling into the sea. This large and sacred river flows across the plains and flows along the Uttara Kuru. After flowing through the central part of that continent it falls into the Northern Sea.

(e) 1. Sūta said: South of the Śveta mountain and north of the Nīla mountain there is a country named Ramaṇaka Varṣa, where people are born.

2. Who are workers in all the seasons and live without growing old. They are excellent people, always eager to see good things.

3. There is also a great divine tree named Rohin, the juice of whose fruit those people drink all their lives.

5. From the north of the Śveta mountain to the south of the Śṛṅgavān mountain there is a country named Hiraṇyavat Varṣa through which the river Hiraṇyavatī flows.

6. It is the abode of hefty people who work in all seasons. They are rich, prosperous and always eager to see excellent things.

8. In that country there is the Lakuch tree yielding 6 juices. The inhabitants of the country enjoy a healthy vigorous life drinking the juice of its fruit.

9. The Śṛṅgavān mountain has three very high summits. One of them is full of diamonds, the second, full of gold and the third, full of all kinds of jewels. All the three provide excellent habitation.

10. South of the North Sea live the Kurus. Consequently, their land is known Kuru Varṣa, which is served by pious Siddhas.

11. The trees of this region provide flowers and sweet fruits throughout the year and even clothing and ornaments.

13. There are other trees named Chirin, which always furnish nectar-like milk containing six juices.

14. There the entire earth is full of diamonds. At a few places there is gold in sand which is pleasant to touch. The land is free from impurities and thorns.

18. Like the couples of 'Chakarvak' they live together very closely. And they enjoy life, not knowing disease, sorrow or suffering.

20. Now let us listen carefully to the account of the Kurus living towards the north of the Jarudhi mountain.

21. Where, there are meadows beautified by caves, valleys and falls and also by precious metals which are served by Siddhas and Caraṇas. In that place there are two Kul mountains with hundreds of summits.

25. There are Candrakānta and Sūryakānta mountains but the great river Bhadrasomā does not flow between them.

26. But thousands of other rivers are full of pure water, sufficient for drinking and bathing for the Kuru people.

31. There are also the forests of Tamāla and Aguru Sandal, rich in fragrance, colour and juice.

32. There are ever green forests full of trees, bushes and creepers and most suitable for habitation.

33. There are also thousands of lakes full of lotuses admired by the Brahmaṇs and others.

38. There is a city which has windows of gold, adorned with a network of diamonds, and thousands of big trees. People wear fine clothes and posses drums, flutes, *vīnas,* etc. Kalpa trees provide fruit in profusion. The city is everywhere like this, so are its gardens.

41. Which is full of the men and women of all the Dwīpas and where the wind blows laden with the fragrance of different flowers.

42. That land is always the abode of happiness, providing relief from fatigue. There the gods descend from the heaven in the shape of human beings and take their birth there. In this way this excellent land is like Heaven.

44. The people of that country are as powerful and as great as gods, and they are seen moving about all over.

45. They decorate themselves with garland-like ornaments and big ear rings.

48. All of them are equally prosperous, but they have neither love nor affection. There is neither Dharma nor Adharma there.

49. They know neither disease nor old age, neither mental confusion nor labour. They disappear like bubbles of water on completing their full length of time.

50. Thus they are extremely happy, not knowing any kind of suffering or pain. Always living in prosperity they do not care for Dharma, but they understand that suffering creates Adharma.

51, 52, 53. To the south of Uttara Kuru, there is a moon-shaped dwīpa known as Candradwīpa, which is the residence of Devas. It is one thousand yojanas in area and is full of various kinds of fruits and flowers.

54. In its centre there is a mountain, in shape and lustre like the moon, named Kumudprabhā, served by Siddhas and Cāraṇas.

55. This Kumudprabhā mountain is beautified by Śvetavaidūrya lotuses, gardens, streams and caves.

56. In this mountain the Candravantā river has its origin. From it this river flows on, full of pure and holy water, bright like the moon's rays.

57. It is an abode of the Moon, the Lord of the Stars. The leader of planets, the moon, always comes here.

58. Therefore, after the name of the moon that mountain and land

are named as Candradwīpa and Candra mountain. By this name it is well-known in heaven as well as on the earth.

We shall first analyse statement (d) above, since it gives the location of mountain ranges with reference to the northern river Bhadrasomā, as it flows from the south to the north across the many mountains mentioned in (a) above. Besides, the sequence of ranges in (d) is somewhat definite and one has only to fix their relative positions on either side of the river. Once this is done, the remaining mountains contained in statement (a) and not mentioned in (d) can be easily located.

The first point and the most important one which emerges from (d) above is that the author is attempting to describe *two* rivers and *not* one which flow towards the north from the Meru (Pāmīr) region. One of these, which is the main river and of which a description is given in para I of (d) above, flows towards the north, then towards the west to fall into the Western Sea which is obviously the Aral Sea in this case. (It is to be borne in mind that the Aral and the Caspian Sea formed one sea and were separated in the not very distant past). The other river which, according to the Purāṇas (see para 2 of statement (d) above), branched off the main river in Supārśva country, took an entirely northerly course and flowing through Uttarakuru fell into the Northern Sea (the Arctic Ocean). The conclusion is inescapable that one of these rivers is the Syr Darya which falls into the Aral Sea and the other is the River Irtysh which rises from the Tarbetagai and falls into the Arctic Ocean.

If these assumptions are correct, which is very probable, the course of the River Syr Daria (with its affluents) can be traced from its headwaters to the Sea of Aral. The lake Son-Kul appears to be the Sombhadra or Mahābhadra of the Purāṇas. It is a beautiful lake perched on a high plateau north of the Pāmīrs in the Kirghiz S.S.R. which more or less coincides with the basin of the River Naryn, or the upper Syr Daria. This basin has been recognised by the Purānics as a definite regional unit and named as the 'Supārśva' country.

The Supārśva country (Kirghistan) is a mountainous region of lower relief than that of the Pāmīrs and where the mountains are more rounded and less indented than those in the latter. The Vṛṣabha mountain, mentioned as one of the mountains of this region, is typical and suggestive of the topography of the Supārśva country while the mountains named as Sahasra Sekhara, Ṣaṭśṛṅga or Mayūra at once bring to one's mind the highly indented ridges of the regions which lie to its west and its south and in which they have been included. It is to be noted that the Purāṇic names of mountains mostly embody their prominent features or their physical appearance, e.g., height, colour or tint, form or profile, bare, forested or snow-covered.

The Supārśva country (Kirghistan) has, in general, less steep rocks and canyons and wider mountain valleys that have gentle slopes and for the most part sufficient moisture. Those valleys abound in rich alpine meadows which cover almost 80 per cent of the whole area. The Purāṇics, therefore, in describing the upper course of the river Bhadrasomā correctly say that 'the river falls and throws water like garlands... and comes down several mountain slopes and flows through rich countries (i.e., rich in vegetation) and after crossing large and several great forests including Sūryavana and Mahāvana, this great river falls into a lake named Mahābhadra....'

Having fixed the position of the Northern Lake (Son-Kul) it is possible, with the help of a good large-scale topographical map of the Syr Daria-Naryn basin to locate the various mountains and ranges which occur in the Purāṇic description of the course of the River Bhadrasomā given in (d) above and, with reference to these, to find the relative position of others mentioned in (a) above. It should, however, be understood that wherever the words 'the river falls on' such and such mountain occur in the Purāṇic accounts, they mean that 'the river receives a tributary from' that mountain.

It will be seen from the topographical map that Śankhakūṭa is that range which lies south of Lake Son and runs parallel to the right bank of the Naryn river. As the river flows in the shadow of this range it receives tributaries from the northern slopes of the Tien-Shan (Nīla of the Purāṇas). These are the headwaters of the River Naryn which are clearly shown on the map.

Nāga Śaila is the Farghana Range (formerly known as the Kugart Range). As the Naryn crosses this range and enters the Farghana valley, it receives tributaries from the north and the north-west which come down the Kuramin Range (which represents the Kapiñjala mountain of the Purāṇas). At the same time the River Naryn meets the Kara Darya which joins it from the south-east. Thereafter the combined waters of the Naryn and Kara Darya form the Syr Darya. The headstreams of Kara Darya rise from the two northern spurs of the great Tien-Shan range, which are named as the Mahānīla and Indranīla in the Purāṇic description.

The Syr Darya now makes a westerly sweep and approaches the northern spurs of the Turkistan Range (Śveta Mountain) and receives Isfarion, Sokh and other tributaries on its left bank, including one from the Sunāg Mountain, a spur of the Turkistan Range indicated on the map. As the river turns north-west beyond the Kuramin Mountain, it leaves the mountainous region consisting of many parallel ranges running transverse to the axis of the Syr. It, however, receives tributaries which flow over the synclines between these parallel ranges. It first of all receives an important tributary, Angren, which rises from the Chatkal range called the Ṣaṭ Śṛṅga Mountain by the Purāṇics. The Chatkal is a highly dissected and indented range with conspicuous peaks and rightly deserves the name of 'Śat Śṛṅga'. Further down the river Syr, other streams Chatkal, Pskem, Chirchik and Keles flow from the east to the main river. According to the Purāṇas they rise from the Puṣkara, Dvirāja, Varāha and Mayūra respectively and have, therefore, been marked on the map accordingly.

As the Syr approaches Kara-Tau (the western extension of Śṛṅgavān) it turns north and receives the combined waters of the Bugun, Aris and others. The main stream of the Aris rises in the Mandantal massif with its three high snow-capped peaks, rightly designated as Tṛśṛṅga by the Purāṇas. The river therefore after 'falling on this Saṁyukta Tṛśṛṅga' sweeps in a north-westerly direction away from Tṛśṛṅga, and running south of Kara-Tau approaches the Ashikal depression in which the River Chu from the east and Sarysu from the north disappear. The Sarysu rises from the Ula-Tau Mountain (or Jarudhi of the Purāṇas). Naturally Jarudhi is the last mountain on which Bhadrasomā 'falls' before falling into the Western or the Aral Sea.

The second paragraph of statement (d) above is casual and sketchy and lacks precision and details. It just gives the information that the Northern River rises again somewhere north of the Supārśva country and flows northward across the Uttarakuru region into the Arctic Ocean. The details of this region are, however, provided in another chapter of the Purāṇas (ch. 45), some paragraphs of which are reproduced under (e) above. These will be discussed later.

Having located the mountain ranges of the northern regions, we are now in a position to consider statement (b) above which deals with the 'Valleys between the Mountain Ranges'.

In this statement four regions are described in some detail. The first of these lies between the Sankhakuta and Vṛṣabha mountains and the great sense of the statement is that this is an inhabited region producing fruits in the midst of the wild forests which cover the land around. This at once suggests that the author is referring to the region in the midst of which the present city of Naryn is situated. Vṛṣabha is obviously the ridge with the rounded profile which lies south of Naryn town (see Fig. 9).

The next valley which is mentioned here is one which lies between Nāgaśail and Kapiñjala ranges. This is certainly the Farghana valley. The

Fig. 8

NORTHERN LANDS, I

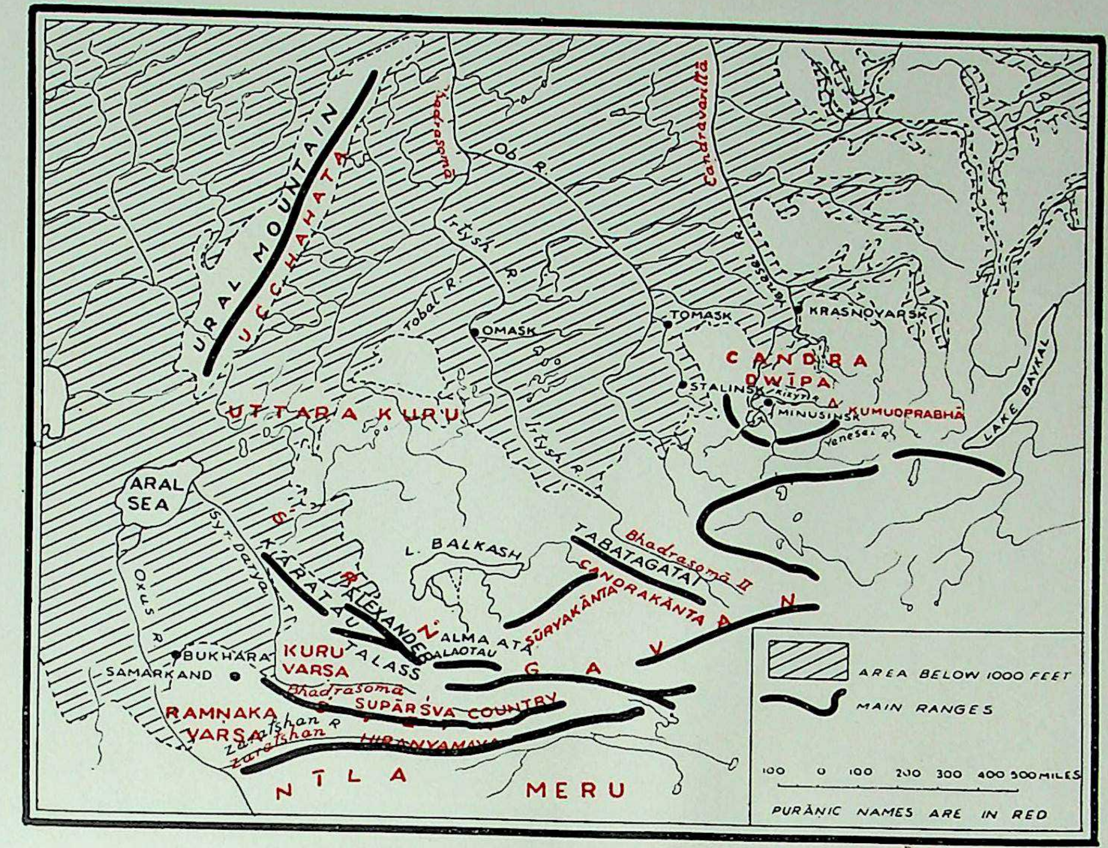
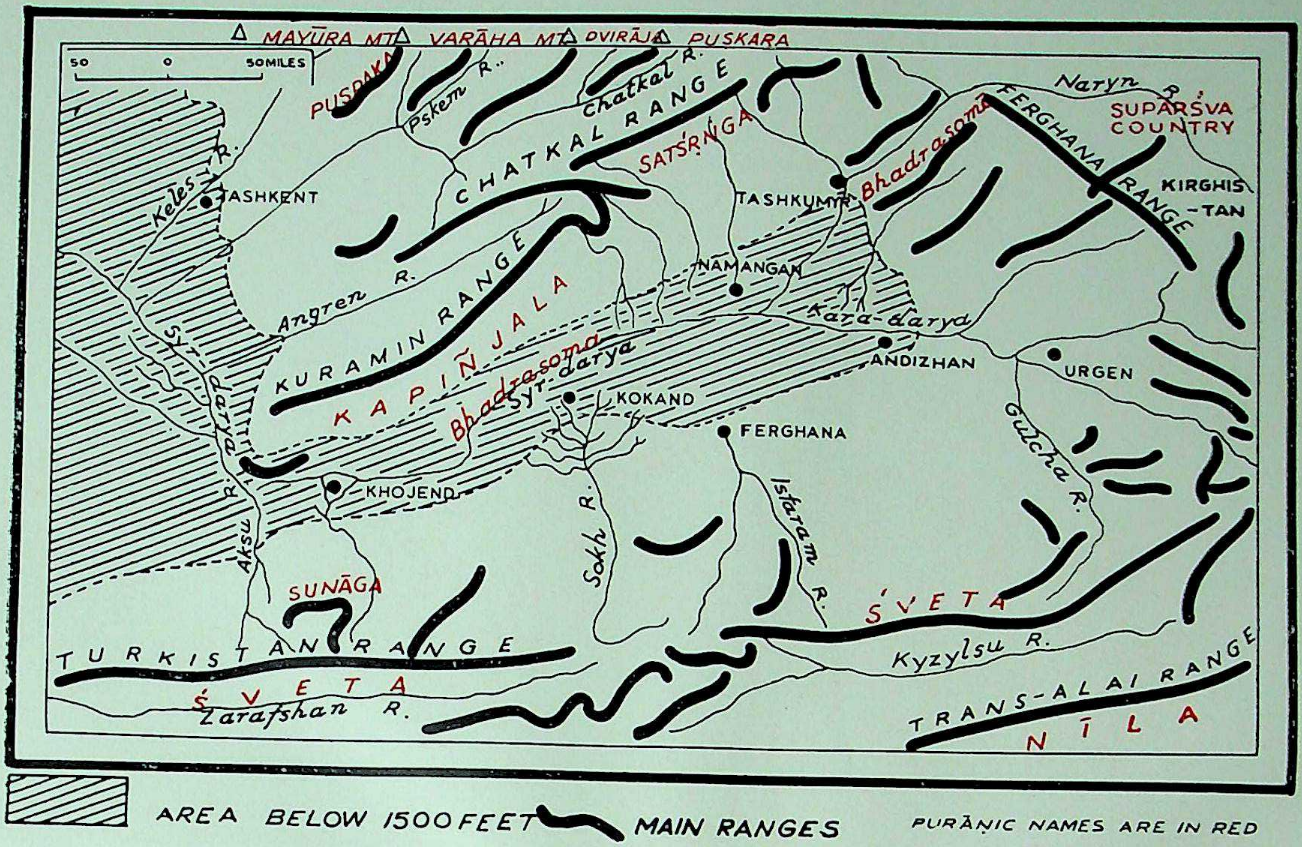

URAL MOUNTAIN
UCCHAHATA
Badrasomā
Ob R.
Candravarittā
Irtysh R.
Tobal R.
OMASK
TOMASK
Yenesei R.
KRASNOYARSK
CANDRA
DWĪPA
STALINSK
Kizyr R.
MINUSINSK
KUMUDPRABHĀ
Yenesei R.
LAKE BAYKAL
UTTARA KURU
ARAL SEA
Syr Darya
Oxus R.
S
R
N
KARATAU
ALEXANDER
TALASS
L. BALKASH
ALMA ATA
ALAOTAU
TABATAGATAI
Bhadrasomā II
CANDRAKĀNTA
SŪRYAKĀNTA
BUKHARA
SAMARKAND
KURU VARSA
Bhadrasoma
SUPĀRŚVA COUNTRY
RAMṆAKA VARṢA
Zarafshan R
Zarafshan
HIRANYAMAYA
N A V A G
NĪLA
MERU
AREA BELOW 1000 FEET
MAIN RANGES
100 0 100 200 300 400 500 MILES
PURĀNIC NAMES ARE IN RED

Fig. 9

NORTHERN LANDS, II


MAYŪRA MT
VARĀHA MT
DVIRĀJA
PUSKARA
50 0 50 MILES
PUSPAKA
Pskem R.
Chatkal R.
CHATKAL RANGE
SATŚṚṄGA
Naryn R.
SUPĀRŚVA COUNTRY
FERGHANA RANGE
KIRGHIS-TAN
Keles R.
TASHKENT
TASHKUMIR
Bhadrasomā
Angren R.
KURAMIN RANGE
KAPIÑJALA
NAMANGAN
Kara-darya
ANDIZHAN
URGEN
Syr-darya
Bhadrasomā
Syr-darya
KOKAND
FERGHANA
KHOJEND
Gulcha R.
Aksu R.
Sokh R.
Isfaram R.
SUNĀGA
ŚVETA
TURKISTAN RANGE
ŚVETA
Kyzylsu R.
Zarafshan R.
TRANS-ALAI RANGE
NĪLA
AREA BELOW 1500 FEET
MAIN RANGES
PURĀṆIC NAMES ARE IN RED

Purāṇic list of the products of this valley tallies so closely with the actual produce of this region that there cannot be the least doubt about its identification. It can be compared with the account of the Farghana valley given by Huen-Tsang who describes it as a land 4,000 li in extent, mountainous on every side, rich and fertile and abounding in flowers and fruit, sheep and horses. Similar account is found in modern books regarding that valley of fruit and flowers. They say, 'under the same vast roof, in the cool shade between the Chaikhanas are stands filled high with sweet-smelling grapes, peaches, apples, pears, plums, pomegranates and melons. And then there are colourful heaps of tomatoes, pepper, egg-plants, cucumbers, cabbages, parsley, bitter yellow and sweet white onions, yellow carrots.... There are basketfuls of dried apricots with stone or stoneless raisins, dried peaches and musk melons, walnuts, almonds and pistachios'.[12]

The third 'valley' which is described in the Purāṇas is one which lies between the Puṣpaka and Meghaśaila mountains. The picture presented by them is that of a dry, desolate and dreary land–which suggests the scenery of the Hungry Steppes which penetrates the intermontane valleys between the Kuramin and Kara Tau ranges. This particular valley between the Puṣpaka and Megha Śaila mountains is that of the River Chirchik which flows between them. We can compare the Purāṇic account of this valley with the one given below:

'As late as a quarter of a century ago you have seen, stretching along the upper Chirchik valley, a narrow strip of taiga or thickets, in which you might have come across a wild boar. The surrounding country was just sun-scorched hilly steppeland where the only object likely to catch your eye was a poor man's lonely Yurt, a weather-worn tent of the kind, about which they used to say, "of a thousand stones thrown upon it, none stays on; they all fall in through a thousand holes". And this other saying was descriptive of life in such a Yurt. "Inside it we can see nothing but the stars when we look up, or the black earth when we look down."[13]' Another characteristic feature of these areas is the occurrence of Takirs or patches of clay ground, so smooth that they are like mirrors when seen from afar, and resound under the hoofs of horses like asphalt. In fact the desert conditions mentioned in the Purāṇas give us a glimpse of the Kizil Kum which presses against the mountainous rampart overlooking Tashkand and Chimkend.

The last paragraph under this head, i.e., (b) above dismisses summarily the northern regions lying beyond Śṛṅgavān. In two or three sentences it gives a cross-section of the vast region stretching to the Arctic. In it we get a glimpse of the lakes of the north, the coniferous forest belt and the Tundras. As 'nobody could go there', a detailed account of the regions was considered by the Purāṇics as unnecessary and superfluous. However, in a later chapter (summarised in (e) above) some details of small areas are given in a generalised manner.

The statement (c) above gives an account of the Jarudhi mountain. The name of this mountain occurs in:

(i) Statement (a) above where it is mentioned as Śailendra Jarudhi, a mountain range situated farthest to the north of Meru.

(ii) Statement (d) above. It is mentioned there that the Northern River falls on the peak of Jarudhi mountain and thereafter falls on the Saṁyukta Tṛśṛṅga peak named the Maryada (boundary) mountain'.

(iii) Statement (e), para 20 of which implies that the Kurus live north of the Jarudhi Mountain.

In fact the traditional land of the Kurus is north of Śṛṅgavān, the northernmost Maryada mountain in the general topographical scheme of Jambū Dwīpa.

Putting all these statements together we come to the conclusion that Jarudhi and Śṛṅgavān refer to one and the same latitudinal mountain system which runs from west to east and forms the southern boundary of Uttara Kuru. Tṛśṛṅga, as identified earlier is the Maidantal massif of Talass Range whose three conspicuous peaks stand boldly against the blue sky when seen from Talass, Jambul or Chimkend. The Jarudhi range may therefore be identified with the Kirghiz-Zailai Ala-Tau, Ketmen chain. Its twin, the Kara Tau, Talass, Kungei, Ketmen chain which extends far westwards is the Śṛṅgavān of the Purāṇics. Both of these chains often meet and merge in one range, for instance, in the Kirghiz and Ketman ranges.

Statement (c) can now be examined in the light of these observations. The Purāṇics are right in saying: 'on the several peaks of Jarudhi mountain these are thousands of cities of Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, etc.' The sheltered and well-watered intermontane valleys and piedmont belts of the ranges which have been identified as Jarudhi have always formed a part of the most populated northernmost belt of Asia containing compact settlements including large and flourishing nodal towns where routes from the east, west and south converged. Even now, large population centres of Kazakhistan, i.e., Jambul, Frunze, Alma Ata, Tokmak, Rybachya, etc. lie in this belt. Statement (c) also affirms that there is a sacred lake Ānanda Jala of clear water in the central part of the Jarudhi range. Its size and the picture of the lake presented by the Purāṇas at once suggest that Ānanda Jala is lake Issak-Kul or Temurtu of the classics. Hueng-Tsang visited this lake which he calls L. Tsing and describes it as a limpid sheet of clear water, bluish black in colour and bitter salt in taste (although it is not so saltish as he says). The name of the lake literally means 'Hot Sea' signifying that the 'sacred' water of the lake gave a feeling of warmth to those weary travellers who came down to it through biting cold winds from across the encircling snow-covered mountains which rise abruptly to about 9,000 feet from the level of the lake. The Purāṇic legend that a dangerous Nāgapati named Canada lives there is fairly old. The legend probably originated and for a long time persisted among the Chinese who believed in the existence of a 'Dragon Lake' north of the Great Snowy Mountain, the Tien-Shan.

### *Varṣas or Countries of the North*

Statement (e), though generalised, is important in as much as it gives a regional cross-section of an extensive land mass from the Pāmīrs to the Arctic—i.e., of the northern Jambū Dwīpa of the Purāṇas.

First of all, statement (e) describes in paras 1-3 the Ramaṇaka Varṣa which according to the Purāṇas was a land bounded by the Nīla in the south and Śveta in the north, i.e. by the Nura-Tau, Turkestan ranges and the Zarafshan, Hissar ranges respectively, according to our identification. It is a known fact that the first states of remote antiquity that arose in this part of Central Asia were Bactria (Oxus basin), south of the Zarafshan-Hissar (Nīla) ranges, and Sogdiana in the basins of the River Zarafshan and Kashka Darya, i.e., between Nīla and the Nura Tau-Turkestan (Śveta) ranges. 'About 2,500 or 2,000 years before the present era, Sogdiana and Bactria were already densely populated states; their inhabitants carried on agriculture of a high level, were able to build extensive irrigation systems and were engaged in trade and handicrafts.'[14] It is said that Samarkaṇḍ[15] was founded in about 3000 B.C. 'Sogdiana can, therefore, be reckoned among the most ancient sites of human settlement. The spatial relationship of Sogdiana with the two major ranges Nīla and Śveta and with the adjoining region Bactria (or Ketumāla) which we will discuss presently, leads us to the conclusion that the Ramaṇaka Varṣa of the Purāṇas is the Sogdiana of the ancient times. It may be that the name Rometan (a district of Bokhara) is a reminder of the Purāṇic name of Sogdiana, i.e., Ramaṇaka or Romaṇaka or Ramyaka. The fact that, 'people work there in all seasons' (para 2) indicates an irrigated land where storage of water and a highly developed technique of irrigation made agricultural activity possible all the year round. The average annual rainfall of Ramaṇaka (Sogdiana) is about 8-14 inches.

The great 'divine tree named Rohiṇa' (para 2) is, according to the Purāṇas, the characteristic plant of this region and the people lived mainly on the juice of its fruit or its products. There are three special fruits of this region—grapes, pears and pomegranates—which have been famous all the world over. Rohiṇa was most probably one of the last two—i.e., pear or pomegranate.

The second Varṣa which extended from the Śveta to the Śṛṅgavān was called Hiraṇyavat-Varṣa. The characteristic features of the people of this region and their occupation are similar to those of Ramaṇaka with the only difference that here the characteristic plant is 'Lakuca' (a kind of bread-fruit plant) instead of Rohiṇa which is found in Ramaṇaka (paras 5-8). In addition, a river Hiraṇyavatī flows through this region. River Zarafshan which literally means 'scatterer of gold' is the exact equivalent of Hiraṇyavatī of the Purāṇas. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the basin of the Zarafshan, i.e., Sogdiana and the basin of the Hiraṇyavatī, i.e., Hiraṇyavat-Varṣa are the same. But in the preceding paragraphs the basin of the Zarafshan and Kashka rivers was equated with the Ramaṇaka Varṣa of the Purāṇas. It, therefore, follows that Ramaṇaka and Hiraṇyavatī Varṣa are the names of the same Varṣa. This means that there is a discrepancy in the Purāṇas when they say that the latter Varṣa lies north of Ramaṇaka between the Śveta and the Śṛṅgavān ranges. Let us examine this discrepancy.

The Vāyu Purāṇa says that Uttara Kuru lies beyond the Śṛṅgavān range towards the north. If this is Uttara Kuru, the question arises, 'Where is the Kuru or Southern Kuru land?' Uttar is a relative term meaning 'north' or 'beyond' some land. North America implies that there is a South America, North Pole implies that there is a South Pole; Dakṣiṇa Kośala implies that there is a Northern Kośala as well. In the Purāṇic accounts, Uttara Kuru is mentioned everywhere but the Dakṣiṇa Kuru or Kuru land (except where it replaces Uttara Kuru) is missing. Besides, the main river of the region between the Śṛṅgavān and the Śveta is Bhadrasomā, the great Northern River (see statement (d) above) and not Hiraṇyavatī as mentioned in (e), para 5.

In other Purāṇas, for instance, in the Bhāgawata Purāṇa, the statement of Vāyu Purāṇa is repeated with the exception of the fact that instead of Uttara Kuru, only Kuru is mentioned. The Matsya declares that Romaṇaka is a varṣa north of Niṣadha and south of Nīla (chapter 113, paras 60, 61) but the Hiraṇyavat Varṣā is placed in its traditional position, between the Śveta and the Śṛṅgavān. The Garuḍa Purāṇa places Ramyaka northwest of Meru (55,2) and Brahma Purāṇa locates it north of Ilāvṛta. Uttara Kuru is again named as Kuru land in the last two Purāṇas.

It appears that there is some confusion regarding Romaṇaka, Hiraṇyavat Varṣa, Kuru and Uttara Kuru lands. A plausible explanation is that the correct Purāṇic divisions, viz. Romaṇaka or Hiraṇyavat Varṣa lying between the Nīla and Śveta ranges, Kuru land between the Śveta and the Śṛṅgavān and the Uttara Kuru beyond the Śṛṅgavān range got mixed up in course of time and an error was introduced by reciters or copyists and was carried over in subsequent versions. This suggestion removes the anomaly in Purāṇic descriptions and indicates the correct positions of all these regions in conformity with all the relevant statements mentioned above.

The last region described in (e) above is the region which lies north of the Śṛṅgavān—Jarudhi System, i.e., the Uttara Kuru. According to the Purāṇas this land is watered by the Northern River (see (d) above) including, of course, its tributaries. Uttara Kuru, therefore, includes the basin of the River Irtysh, the Ob, the Ishim and the Tobol, in other words 'The Western Siberian Region', according to modern regional classification. In addition to the basin of the River Irtysh and its tributaries, the Western Siberian Region (or Uttara Kuru of the Purāṇas) includes a region of inland drainage which occupies its southern margin and the mountainous massif of the Sayan and the Altai. The Purāṇic description of all these sub-regions in statement (e) is explicit and fairly accurate as regards relief and drainage. In fact this is a major contribution of the Purāṇas to the knowledge of these lands which were either unknown or imperfectly known till the 16th century A.D.

Statement (e) above affirms that in the Kuru land there are two Kul (or regional) mountains, Sumahat and Uccarita with 'hundreds of summits' (para 24). Obviously these mountains are the Ural mountains and the Highlands of Central Siberia from where the Yenesei receives its right-bank tributaries.[16] The details of these distant mountains are missing in the Purāṇas except that they are rich in precious metals and are sparsely populated (served by Siddhas and Cāraṇas only—para 21). The plain between these Kul mountains, i.e., the basin of the Irtysh, however, contained forests, flowers, fruits, diamonds and gold and supported compact population groups living here and there, depending entirely (including clothing) on forest produce (para 11). This is surely a reference to the taiga belt of Western Siberia.

Away from the basin of the River Irtysh, but included within the Kuru region, there is a region described as follows (para 25-50):

(i) It is a region (of inland drainage) through which the Northern River (Bhadrasomā) does not flow (para 25) but is drained by a number of other rivers. It is full of large and small lakes.

(ii) Contains Alpine forests (Agarh, Tamal and Sandal), cultivated lands and gold-bearing sands (31-38).

(iii) Contains an important city (para 38) and a number of settlements.

(iv) There is an admixture of people of different races ('men and women of all the dwīpas'—para 41) in this region, and on the whole they are powerful people and are mostly nomands (para 45), since they occupy a certain area for some time and disappear like 'bubbles of water,' in other words, migrate to other lands (para 49).

All these features point at once to the basin of Lake Balkhash, Alai Kul, Sassik Kul and other lakes which lie between the Ula Tau—Tarbagatai watershed and the Śṛṅgavān range.[17] The city mentioned in (iii) above is most probably Alma-Ata ('father of apples') which was formerly known as Verny. The pointed reference to the mixed population of this region is substantiated by the population pattern found there even today. Here we find a mixture of the Russians, the Chinese, the Mongols, the Kirghiz, the Kimluks, the Samoyeds, the Uzbeks, the Uigurs, the Dungans and others. It was the northernmost corridor through which passed the Scythian swarms in successive waves of migration across the steppes, the conquering armies of Mongol invaders and the destructive hordes led by the Turks of Central Asia.

The two mountains Candrakānta and Sūryakānta can be easily identified with the help of the statement that *none* of the rivers which rise from them falls into the great Northern River (the Bhadrasomā or the Irtysh, para 25). The only mountains in this region of which the drainage does not reach the Irtysh are the Tarbagatai and Jingar-Ala Tau mountains. They are, therefore, the mountains referred to in para 25 of statement (e) above.

In the south of Uttara Kuru region, the Purāṇas mention a moon-shaped dwīpa (para 1-53) which they name Candra Dwīpa. With the help of the details given in paragraphs 53-58, we could attempt to find a region which satisfies the following conditions:

(i) The region is an elevated region which is a distinct physiographic unit: it is surrounded by a rim of high mountains, open on one side to make it comparable to the moon (para 51).

(ii) There is a high mountain rising from the floor of the region near its centre. This is named Kumudprabha by the Purāṇas (para 54).

(iii) It is an extensive enclosed region which is about 1,000 yojanas in extent (para 53).

(iv) The region including the central mountain is covered with plenty of natural vegetation and watered by a number of streams.

(v) An important river called the Candravarittā full of clear water rises from this central mountain and flows out of the region (56). It is understood that the river Candravarittā is not a tributary of the Irtysh, otherwise this river would have been included in the 'Northern River'.

The region, too, can be easily located on a large-scale map of Southern Siberia. The cul-de-sac in which the River Yenisei rises and which is known as the Tuva region practically answers to all the features mentioned above. It is surrounded by the Sayan ranges on all sides, except the north. Through this northern 'gate' where the town of Krasnovarsk is situated, the River Yenisei, after collecting the drainage of the basin, rushes out towards the north. The River Candravarittā is, therefore, the Yenisei river itself which, coming out of this 'dwīpa' or region, flows along the eastern margin of Kuru land to the Arctic Ocean. In this 'moon-shaped' basin which we can conveniently call Candra Dwīpa (by its Purāṇic name) there is a conspicuous peak (about 24,000 feet high), about 100 miles southeast of Minusinsk, a town of the Yenisie. This is the Kumudprabhā of the Purāṇics which towers in the centre of Candradwīpa. The whole region is fairly well-watered and forested and is sparsely populated.

To sum up, the Purāṇic description of the Northern Regions of Jambū Dwīpa covers a very vast area, from the Urals and the Caspian to the Yenisei and from the Turkestan, Tien-Shan ranges to the Arctic. It describes the topography of the whole land very accurately and in some cases picturesquely, but the facts of human geography, particularly the products and settlements, are treated very scantily. This is natural since for a large region like this one has to be concise to keep the subject-matter within reasonable limits. After all, the Purāṇas are not books of geography and it is creditable that within a few paragraphs their authors have compressed much relevant information about practically unknown and very difficult lands without losing precision or proportion which fact has made the identification of topographical features comparatively easy.

It is to be noted that none of the peaks of mountains, nor the summits of plateaus nor high valleys in the vast region described in this chapter have been particularised or sanctified by associating them with the residence of gods like Indra, Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu, Keśava, Garuḍa, etc. A plausible explanation appears to be that the Indo-Aryans never settled down permanently beyond the Nīla mountain.

# CHAPTER VI

# Regions of Jambu Dwipa: Ketumala (or the Basin of the Oxus)

ALTHOUGH all the Purāṇas touch upon this region, only the Vāyu gives details about its topography and settlement. They all, however, agree that (i) it is a major region of Jambū Dwīpa situated to the west of Meru (or Ilāvṛta) and (ii) it is drained by the great river Chakṣu (or the Oxus) which take its rise in Meru. Ketumāla is bounded on the south by the great latitudinal range Niṣadha (i.e. Hindūkush–Kunlun) and in the north by the Nīla (Zarafshan-Tien Shan) which runs parallel to the Niṣadha. On the west of Ketumāla is the Caspian, the 'Western Sea' of the Purāṇas into which the Oxus formerly used to drain. Thus we observe that the boundaries of Ketumāla are well-defined except in the north-west where the desert barrier of Turan makes its definition unnecessary (see Fig. 10).

The topography of Ketumāla and Western Ilāvṛta which, in more ancient accounts, for instance in the Mahābhārata, was included in Ketumāla, is so clearly and accurately described that one can very easly reconstruct the map of Ketumāla from the Purāṇas and check the details on a modern topographical map. As usual the Vāyu Purāṇa describes the various aspects of this region in different chapters. The relevant headings and paragraphs which deal with them are as follows:

(a) Mountains west of Śītoda Lake
Ch. 36, paras 26, 27 and 28.
(b) Valleys between mountains
Ch. 38, paras 36-62.
(c) 'Dwelling places' or settlements 'on mountains'
Ch. 39, paras 59-64.
(d) 'The Western River'
Ch. 42, paras 41-57.
(e) Description of Ketumāla
Ch. 44, paras 1-24.

We shall first of all discuss (d) above, since we know what the Purāṇas mean by the 'Western River' by virtue of its position with respect to Meru on the one hand, and the bounding ranges, the Nīla and the Niṣadha, on the other. We have one more feature which helps us in this case, i.e. the Caspian Sea or the'Western Sea' of the Purāṇas in relation to Jambū Dwīpa. Statement (a) above is supplementary to (d) and will, therefore, be considered as a corollary of the latter.

Our observations would then be checked with the help of statements (b) and (c) above, since the account of sub-regions (b) and population grouping (c) should tally with the actual conditions prevailing there. Statement (e) will be considered last.

The course of the 'Western River', (d) above, is described in the following words:

> Now I shall describe the Pratyantya mountains located on the western side of the Meru mountain. It is served by several sacred saints and has a large number of caves etc. Its central region is full of low-lying gardens. The river moves round the Meru mountain, which is associated with god Śankara and its water, used by Devas, moves with great speed and passes several countries and falls from the peak of the Meru mountain. Its water is white and is used by many living beings. This great river after irrigating Devabhṛja, Mahābhṛja and Vaibhṛja forests, enters Śītoda lake. From Śītoda it goes to the Supakṣa mountain. That sacred river served by Devas again falls on the Śikhī mountain. Thereafter it flows from one mountain to another, for instance, from Śikhī to Kaṅka, Vaidūrya, Kapila, Gandhamādana, Piñjara, Kumudācala, Madhoman, Mukuṭa, Kṛṣṇa to Śveta Śaila and ultimately comes down to thousand-peaked Śailendra. In this way this river, after crossing thousands of lands, hundreds of great mountains and after irrigating forests etc. and joining waters of several rivers, flows through the central part of great Pāriyāta mountain, which is full of several waterfalls, rivers, caves and peaks. Ultimately it descends on the plains and after irrigating the Ketumāla dwīpa falls into the Western Sea.[1]

Let us try to locate the relief features named in the above statement on a modern physical map of Central Asia. The one which was found convenient for this purpose was a Russian map of Central Asia on a scale 1 : 1,500,000 published in Moscow in 1954.[2] It gives a clear, three-dimensional picture of the relief of the whole basin of the Oxus.

The Oxus (Vakshsh-ab, Āmū Darya or Chakṣu of the Purāṇas) rises from the Victoria Lake in the southern Pāmīrs on the Russian-Afghanistan border. It is known there as the Pāmīr River which meets, further west near Qala Panja, the Wakhan Darya which rises in the Muzkol range. After its junction with the Wakhan it is known as Pyandzh. It skirts the Wakhan range and near Ishkamish, takes a sharp turn towards the north, guided by the longitudinal Badakhshan ranges which run parallel to it. In its northerly course, it receives important tributaries—the Shakh Darya, Gunt, Bartang, Yazgulam and Vanch on its right bank and a minor stream Shiwa on its left bank. At Kalai Khumb it turns again, first south and then west, this time guided by the Darwaz range which limits its progress towards the north. Further down it meets the Yaksu before its junction with its most important right-bank tributary, the Vakhsh. The combined waters of the Vakhsh and the Panj are called the Āmū Darya or the Oxus. Thereafter four major tributaries from the northern mountains Hissar and Zarafshan ranges, i.e. the Kafirnigan, Surkhan and Shirabad meet it on its right bank while only two, the Kokcha and the Kunduz, which rise from the spurs of the northern range of the Hindūkush, each it from the south. Other streams from the south, i.e. the Khulm, the Balkh-ab, the Abi-i-Safed, the Ab-i-Kausar, the Murghab and the Tedhen which appear to have been much more active in the past, now die out before they reach the Oxus. In ancient times, when the Oxus followed a more southerly course (its old bed is marked on the maps) and emptied itself into the Caspian, it is almost certain that the Oxus received the waters of these streams as well. The questions which arise here are, 'What do the Purāṇas mean by the River Chakṣu'? 'Which of its headstreams did they take for its source?' The river Oxus has three main affluents, the Vakhsh, the Bartang and the Pamir-Vakhan fork, each of which was taken as the mainstream at different times while the others were considered as its tributaries. The very fact that the Greek name of river Oxus is derived from Vakhsh-ab suggests that the Vakhsh was considered the mainstream in ancient times. It is true that the Vakhsh even today contributes the largest volume of water to the Oxus as compared with that brought by the Pyandzh (or Panj), although the latter is the longer of the two. In mediaeval times the Bartang which also used to bring a large volume of water comparable to the Vakhsh-ab was considered as the source river. In the 19th century a landslide which dammed its waters and formed Lake Sarez, reduced the Bartang to a small stream which thus lost its claim as the headstream of the Oxus. The river Pāmir was finally accepted as the sources of the Oxus when the Oxus was explored right upto the Wakhan Finger.

The Purāṇas, as will be seen later, recognised and gave equal importance to the Vakhsh-ab and the Pyandzh. In their opinion the Pyandzh 'went round Meru' (Pāmīr) and combined with Vakhsh-ab, thus their Chakṣu practically encircled Meru on three sides. The Purāṇas, therefore, first mention the mountains along which the Vakhsh comes down to join the present Āmū Darya. Thereafter they describe the mountains outside the Meru region across which the Pyandzh flows to join the Vakhsh-ab. With this background, it is possible to identify the mountains mentioned in statement (d) quoted above and we will attempt to interpret the Purāṇic statement with the help of the topographical map of the Oxus basin.

The Supakṣa range is the range on the left bank of the lower course of the Vakhsh river. The upper course of this river obviously lies in the Meru region and is therefore left out of Purāṇic accounts. On modern maps its southern extension is named Jitym Tau. 'From the Supakṣa mountain the river falls on the Śikhī mountain'. The word 'Śikhī' reminds one of the medieval Shignan (or Shiqi-Nan of the Arabs), a region which included the whole of the modern Afghan Badakhshan, surrounded on three sides by the northern bend of the Oxus. The range on the right bank of the Oxus adjoining Badakhshan practically marked the limit of Shiqi-nan. The Śikhī mountain is therefore the Jitym Tau-Alim Tau range on which the Pyandzh 'falls' before its junction with the Vakhsh. Thus, after mentioning these two mountains which lie outside the Meru region and which are drained by the two headstreams of the Oxus, the Purāṇas proceed to describe those mountains from which or across which streams come down to the Oxus.

The Kanaka mountain is obviously the Darwaz range which has been famous, since ancient times, for large formations of gold-bearing conglomerates. Even today the flourishing gold mining industry of Tajikistan is located near Kalai-Khamb which lies on the southern slopes of this range.

The next four mountains, the Vaidūrya, the Kapila, the Gandhamādana and the Piñjara pertain to the tributaries of the Oxus which join it from the south. The indicators are the names Vaidūrya and Gandhamādana. The former are the mountains of Afghan Badakhshan rom which lapiz lazuli was mined in ancient and medieval times in the upper valley of the Kokcha river above Jurm. The latter has been repeatedly mentioned in the Purāṇas as a range sometimes south and sometimes west of Meru. The location of Gandhamādana on the accompanying map would bear out the fact that both the Purāṇic statements are correct in a way. This range lies to the south of the Pāmīrs but it extends farther towards the west in a south-westerly direction. The four rivers which correspond to and drain these four mountains are, in the same order, the Kokcha, the Ishkamish the Kunduz and the Balkh-ab. Thus on modern maps the Vaidūrya mountain is equivalent to Saped Khirs (or Badakhshan range), the Kapila mountain corresponds to the Khwaja Muhammad range, the Gandhamādana to the northern parapet of the Hindūkush system and the Piñjara to the naked hills which flank the Mazar-i-Sharif province of Afghanistan in the south-east.

Having named the mountains which lie north and south of the Pyandzh, the Purāṇas mention the mountains which lie to the north of the Āmū

Darya (Oxus), rivers from which join the mainstream beyond the junction of the Vakhsh-ab and the Pyandzh.

The Kumuda mountain is the Ak-Tau Rangan Tau range which lies between the Kafirnigan river and the Vakṣu river. It is tempting to associate Kumud with the Greek term 'Kumedai', a Śaka tribe which, according to Ptolemy (vi, 12-13), inhabited the mountainous tract which undoubtedly corresponds to the term Kumedh. Yaqubi and Ibn-Rusta refer to a locality of which the name may be restored as Kumedh. Yaqubi says that Munk was the frontier 'towards the lands of the Turks, towards the locality called Rasht, Kumedh and Bamir (Pāmīr).' Ibn Rusta certainly places the Kumedh, downstream of Rasht (upper Vakhsh valley). The author of *Hindūd-al-Ālam*[3] says that the Kafirnigan river rises from the limits of the Kumji. In fact, in the early medieval period Kumedh signified the mountainous region of Jitym Tau-Rangan Tau between the Vakhsh and the Kafirnigan rivers inhabited by the Kumji Turks and formed as a sort of buffer state between the Chaghanian and the Khuttal, two important principalities of the upper Oxus basin. Thus it would not be unreasonable to presume that by the Kumud mountain the Purāṇas probably mean the mountain of Kumedha, i.e. the ridges between the Vakhsh-ab and Kafirnigan rivers.

The Madhumān is the Baba Tagh range between the Kafirnigan and the Surkhan Durya. Mukut is definitely the Baisun Tau mountains which were named 'Turban-wearing' by a Khorezm traveller when, from the Karshi steppe, he first saw their snow-topped ridges, with Hazrat Sultan Peak (16,377 feet) rising above them like a grey-haired patriarch. Kṛṣṇa is equivalent to the Kara Tagh (Black) mountain of medieval geographers which is the northern continuation of the Baba Tagh range joining eventually the Hissar range. It marks the boundary between the modern Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The name Karatagh, a town which lies on the Surkhan Darya reminds us of the old name of the nearby ridge in which this river rises. Śveta mountain corresponds to the snow-peaked ridge overlooking Ziddy in which the easternmost tributary of the Surkhan rises. Sahasra Śekhara is the mighty, rugged and extensive Hissar range which runs as a complex mass of innumerable peaks from Kugitang Tau to the ancient Karataghin or the Garm region of upper Vakhsh-ab.

Having mentioned the mountains lying north of the Oxus the Purāṇas rightly point out that the river thereafter 'irrigating thousands of lands, flows across the central part of the Pāriyātra mountain'. The only river which could discharge its waters into the Oxus is the Murghab, on which Meru is situated, keeping in mind the fact that the Oxus formerly used to flow along a more southerly course into the Caspian. The Pāriyātra is therefore equivalent to the Band-i-Baba and Band-i-Turkistan ranges or the Paropamisus of northern Afghanistan.

Let us now consider statement (a) above which runs as follows:

> Those ranges which are located in the different parts of Śītoda Lake (the Western Lake) are Suvakṣa, Śikhī-Śaila, Kāla, Vaidūrya Giri, Kapila, Piṅgala, Rudra, Suras, Kumuda, Madhumana, Añjani, Mukuṭa Kṛṣṇa, Pāṇḍura, Sahasra Śikhara, Pārijāta and great mountain Tṛśṛṅga.

If we compare this list of mountains with the one discussed under (d) we observe that:

(i) The mountains Gandhamādana Piñjara and Śveta, though they contribute to the waters of the Oxus, are not located, even approximately, to the west of the Meru region; hence they are excluded from the above list. Their location on the accompanying map will show that the first two are more towards the south, and the third more towards the north than towards the west of Meru.

(ii) The mountains Piṅgala, Rudra, Suras, Pāṇḍura and Tṛśṛṅga, though they do not contribute to the waters of the Oxus, are nevertheless situated to the west of Meru, hence they are included in statement (a) and excluded from statement (d) above.

(iii) 'Kāla' and Kanaka are identical. The discrepancy between statements (a) and (d) with regard to this name is obviously a copyist's error which somehow crept into the Purāṇic texts.

The mountains Piṅgala, Rudra, Suras, Añjani, Pāṇḍura and Tṛśṛṅga are the only mountains which remain to be identified. Tṛśṛṅga is obviously the Vashan Tagh (16,600)–Khan Tagh (17,900)–Chimtarga (17,997) cluster of peaks (all within a radius of 3 miles) between the Turkistan and Hissar ranges north of Karatagh. This cluster of giant peaks dominates the eastern horizon when seen from Samarkand or Kitab. Pāṇḍura corresponds to the low yellowish limestone ridge which runs closely parallel to the right bank of the Surkhan river up to Devau. Añjani corresponds to the spurs of the Hissar range which flank Kafirnigan town in the north. The first three mountains could not be identified.

Let us now check up our identifications with the help of statements (d) and (c) mentioned earlier. The former describes the 'valleys' or sub-regions situated between the different ranges named in statements (a) and (d). Here are the relevant paragraphs from the Vāyu Purāṇa:

(i) Respected Brāhmaṇas, I shall now describe the internal valleys and their extents which are located on the west. In the central part of

Suvakṣa and Śikhī-Śaila mountains there is a rocky and stony area. Its diameter is one hundred Yojanas and it is always hot. People are afraid of touching that surface. It is inaccessible to all creatures, and dangerous even to mighty men. In the central part of that rocky surface there is a dangerous place, with a diameter of thirty Yojanas, where Agni Deva is throwing thousands of flames into it. Agni Deva is always burning without any fuel. Whichever portion is given to Fire God, the same God Fire is always burning there. There is a Matulunga surface of ten Yojanas between the great mountains named as Devāpi and Caya. That entire forest area is beautiful. It is full of golden and luscious fruits. This place contains the most sacred Āśrama of Viraṣpati, full of saints, which gives pleasure and fulfills all desires. In the same way there is a Kesar valley covering several Yojanas beween two great mountains named Kumud and Añjanācala. The forest in that area has beautifully coloured, everblooming flowers. They are big and white like moon, and bees hover around them. There is the great resplendent temple of Viṣṇu god which is visible from all the three Lokas and is respected by all. There is a region, ninety miles long and thirty Yojanas broad between the great mountains named Kṛṣṇa and Pāṇḍura where one smooth stone is stretching from one end to the other. There are no trees and creepers. There is a great facility for walking because the surface is nowhere uneven. In its midst there is a tank abounding in lily flowers.

That tank is full of thousand-petalled lotuses and it appears as if it has been decorated with innumerable umbrellas. Mahāpadma blue-petalled lotuses and bees beautify this tank. This lotus forest is always resounding with the charming songs of Kinnaras. This lily land covers a vast area. Yakṣas and Gandharvas roam over it and saints look after it. In a circular tract in the midst of that lotus forest with a diameter of five Yojanas there is a Nyagrodha (Vata) tree with a big trunk and several branches. There resides a thousand-mouthed demon-killer, Nīlambara Deva. In brightness it is like full moon. This land located in the centre of lotus land is always worshipped by Yakṣas, Gandharvas and scholars. There Nārāyaṇa is worshipped daily. That place is famous in all Lokas as Anant Sadana and is covered with garlands of lotuses and innumerable flowers. In the central part of Sahasra-Śikhara and Kumuda mountains there is a mountain peak thirty Yojanas in breadth, one hundred Yojanas in length and as high as an arrow can be shot upwards. Sounds of a variety of animals are always heard. It is surrounded by trees from which honey is dropping. The fruits of those trees are sweet-smelling, very tasty and as big as an elephant's body. On that peak is located the Āśrama of Śukrācārya. That Āśrama is served by Devas and Ṛṣis and is resplendent and famous.

The 'valley' between the Suvakhṣa and Śikhī ranges, according to our identification corresponds to the Kulyab region or the basin of the Yakṣu river which flows between them. This region is unique in mineral deposits. Near Kulyab Hoja-Sartis and Hoja-Mumin (the Devāpi and Caya of the Purāṇas) tower majestically. 'These two mountains are the biggest salt cupolas not only in the USSR but also in the world. Their salt deposits are sufficient for supplying the needs of the entire population of the globe for hundreds of years. Where there is salt, there are often subterranean gases. Many such gases in abundant quantity are accumulated here. All these gases are now being studied, and scientific investigation has shown that the Kulyab District is one of the biggest gas-bearing districts in Tajikistan.'[4] The 'dangerous place of Agni Deva... throwing thousands of flames... and always burning without fuel' evidently refers to the subterranean gases which give rise to 'fire without fuel' for long periods. The forested area full of 'golden and luscious fruits' and the 'sacred Āśrama of Viraṣpati' corresponds to the town of Kulyab and its surrounding region. 'Near Kulyab the arms and channels of the Panj form a multitude of islands overrun with reeds, oleaster and sledge. The jungles of this region are the haunts of tigers, wild boars, lynxes, jackals and wild birds. These jungles are, however, being cleared away.'[5]

In Tajikistan there are two areas which have been famous for the production of saffron. They are named by Hudūd-al-Ālam[6] as Shuman and Vayshagirt. Shuman which is mentioned usually together with Akharun was a considerable principality in medieval times probably comprising the Kafirnigan basin or rather its upper part. The town of Shuman may have occupied the site of Du-Shamba (near Stalinabad). Veshagird corresponds with Fyzabad on the Ilaq, left affluent of the Kafirnigan river. This tallies with the Purāṇic statement that 'There is a Kesar valley extending to several yojanas, between two great mountains named Kumud and Añjanācala', i.e. the Rangan Tau range and the southern longitudinal spurs of the Hissar range. 'The temple of Viṣṇu which is visible from all the three Lokas' most probably refers to the Anzob Peak of the Hissar range where the river Varzhob rises and which dominates the upper Kafirnigan basin.

The 'country between the great mountains Kṛṣṇa and Pāṇḍura' is described in the above statement as 'consisting of one smooth stone stretching from one end to the other.' The basin of the lower Surkhan is a desolate waste containing large patches of smooth clay-encrusted land. The flood water of the Surkhan or other minor streams during the occasional heavy rains accumulates in the depressions, but soon evaporates, leaving bare smooth clayey surfaces devoid of all vegetation. However, in areas where the volume of accumulated water is considerable and does not evaporate altogether lakes are formed offering ideal conditions for the growth of lotuses. Anant Sadana appears to have been located somewhere near modern Termez.

The high peak between the Kumuda and Sahasra Śikhara mountains is located where the Hissar and Zarafshan ranges meet. This peak appears to be the snow-covered Peak Barzengi (16,456 feet) beyond the Pakshif pass. The Purāṇas attached sanctity to the peak by associating it with the Āśrama of Śankarācārya.

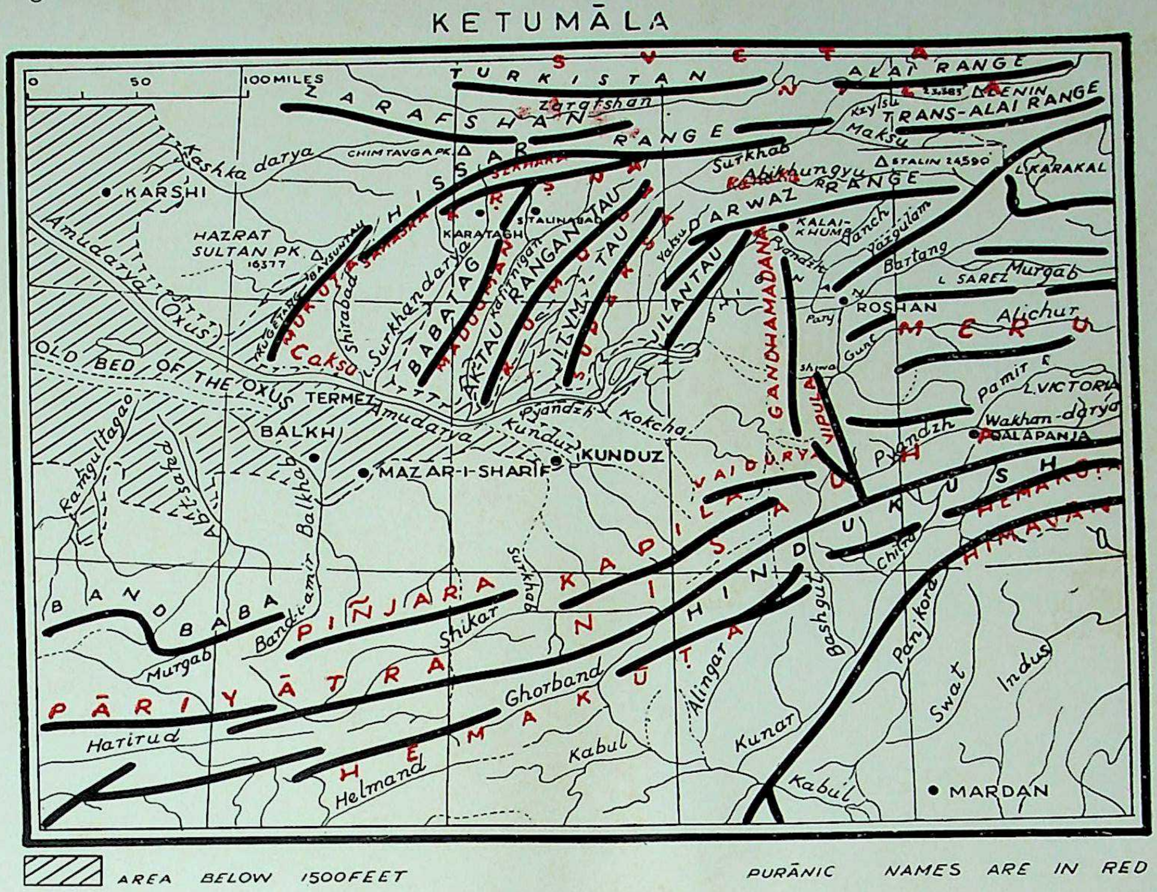
The statement (c) which gives an account of 'settlements on mountains' is very sketchy as will be seen from the following paragraph:

> Kumuda mountain is the residing place of Kinnaras. Urag-janas live on the Añjana mountain and Gandharvas live in big houses on the Kṛṣṇa mountain. The city of scholars with big houses is located on the beautiful-peaked Pāṇḍura mountain. It is decorated and surrounded by high walls. The gold-studded Sahasrapuri of Demons is located on the Sahasra Śikhara mountain. The living places of Pannagas are located on the Mukuṭa mountain and Munis are living happily on the Puṣpaka mountain. There are poor living places of Vaivasta, Some, Vāyu and Nāga Dwīpa on Supakṣa mountain. Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Yakṣas, Nāgas, cholars, saints, etc. living in these aforesaid places and cities worship their respective Devas. [7]

It appears that the vast area north of the Oxus now known as Tājikistan was very sparsely populated. This is true since in ancient times the population was limited to the higher mountain valleys while the lower basins of the Vakhsh, Kafirnigan, Surkhan and Shirabad were absolute deserts. According to the Purāṇas, the inhabited zones were situated on the flanks of the Kumuda, Añjana, Kṛṣṇa, Mukuṭa and Pāṇḍura mountains. This brings out the fact that the belt of settled population in ancient times covered Baisun, Denau (medieval Changhanian) Karatagh (medieval Hamvaran), Diu-Shambe (medieval Shuman and modern Stalinabad) and Kafirnigan (medieval Ajdiyan) regions, i.e., a belt 100 miles long and 20 miles wide along and parallel to the southern piedmont of the Hissar range. The 'Sahsrapurī of demons' appears to be the ancient Hissar. 'The city of scholars' on the Pāṇḍura mountain probably corresponds to old Chaghanian or Denau (on modern maps) and the 'living place of Pannagas' on the Mukuṭa mountain is the ancient settlement of Baysun which has always been an important town controlling the Iron Gate to the west. The Purāṇas do not attach much importance to the Vakhsh valley. They only refer to the 'poor living places' or miscellaneous population groups which lived scattered along the valley. It is to be noted that the fire-worshippers of the Vakhan, Shugnan, Roshan and other valleys of the upper Oxus have been ignored altogether in the Meru region beyond the limits of the area under discussion.

Lastly, let us consider statement (c) above. It is contained in a small

Fig. 10


KETUMĀLA
0 50 100 MILES
TURKISTAN
ALAI RANGE
ZARAFSHAN
Zarafshan
RANGE
TRANS-ALAI RANGE
LENIN
Kzylsu
Maksu
SVETA
HISSAR
Kashka darya
CHIMTAVGA PK.
KARSHI
HAZRAT SULTAN PK. 16377
Amudarya (Oxus)
OLD BED OF THE OXUS
TERMEZ
Shirabad
Surkhandarya
BABATAG
AK-TAU
RANGAN TAU
JILGYM-I-TAU
JILANTAU
KARATAGH
STALINABAD
Kafirnigan
Yaksu
DARWAZ
Surkhab
Abikhungyu RANGE
STALIN 24590
KARAKAL
KALAI-KHUMB
Pyandzh
Vanch
Yazgulam
Bartang
SAREZ
Murgab
ROSHAN
Pary
Alichur
MERU
Gunt
Shiwa
Pamir
L. VICTORIA
Wakhan-darya
PALAPANJA
GANDHAMADANA
VIPULA
VAIDURYA
Caksu
Kokcha
Kunduz
KUNDUZ
BALKH
MAZAR-I-SHARIF
Balkhab
Ab-i-safed
Ramgultagao
BAND BABA
Band-i-amir
Murgab
PIÑJARA
KAPILA
Surkhab
Shikar
PĀRIYĀTRA
HINDUKUSH
NISADHA
Haritud
Ghorband
HEMAKŪTA
Helmand
Kabul
Alingar
Kunar
Bashgul
Chitral
Panjkora
Swat
Indus
HIMAVAN
MARDAN
AREA BELOW 1500 FEET
PURĀNIC NAMES ARE IN RED

chapter entitled 'The Description of Ketumāla' which gives long lists of the various 'countries' or sub-regions of Ketumāla and of the rivers which drain them. This chapter[8] may be summarised as follows:

(i) Ketumāla contains seven 'Kula' or regional mountains: the Viśāla, the Kambala, the Kṛṣṇa, the Jayanta, the Harī, the Aśoka and the Vardhamāna.

(ii) It consists of 53 main sub-regions (besides others )situated in the hills and the plains. They are named as follows:[9]

Gomanuṣya, Kapotaka, Tatsukha, Bhramara, Mahiacala-Kūṭaka, Sumaula, Stavaka, Krauñcha, Kṛṣṇanāgamani-Puñjaka, Kūṭa Kambala, Mauṣiya, Samudrāntaka, Karmbhva, Kucha, Śveta, Suvarṇakaṭaka, Śwat, Tañga, Kṛṣpāda, Vīha, Kapila-Karṇika, Atya Karalgolwala, Henan, Vanpataka, Mahiṣa, Kumuabha, Kaṛvata, Sahọtkaca, Śonkasa, Mahānasna Vanagajabhūmika, Karañjamanjama, Vaha, Kṣianadipaṇḍu-Bhūmika, Kubera, Dhūmaja, Jangha, Vañga, Rājiva Kokila, Vacāñga, Mahāñga, Madhauraiya, Surecaka, Pittala, Kācala, Śravaṇa, Matnakāśika, Godava, Bakula, Vañga, Vañgaka, Modaka and Kāla.

(iii) The people of the above sub-regions are the 'first to drink the water of the river Suvaprā' served the Mahānāgas.

(iv) These also drink the waters of other rivers which flow in those sub-regions. The following 42 such rivers are mentioned:[10]

Suvaprā, Kambalā, Tāmasī, Śyāmā, Sumedhā, Bakulā, Vikīrṇā, Śikhimāla, Dabhravatī, Bhadravatī, Śukanadi, Palaśā, Bhīmā, Prabhañjanā, Kaicī, Punyā, Kuśavatī, Dakṣā, Śakavatī, Puṇyodā, Candrāvatī, Somaulā, Ṛṣabhā, Sumudramālā, Campāvatī, Ekachā, Puṣkalā, Vahā, Suvarṇā, Nandinī, Kālīndī, Bharatī, Śito-Dampatikā, Brāhmī, Viśālā, Pīvarī, Kumbha-Karī, Rośā, Mahisī, Mānuṣi, Daṇḍā and Nandanadī.

It is difficult to identify all the features named in the above description of Ketumāla. But even a few identifications mentioned below are sufficient to bring out one important fact regarding the extent of that region of Jambū Dwīpa which was called Ketumāla by the Purāṇics. They show that Ketumāla signified practically the whole of the ancient Bactria which included the whole of the present Afghan Turkistan (north of Hindukush), the lower Hari Rud Valley, the basin of Murghab Kashka system (all south of the old bed of Āmū Darya) and the basins of the Surkhan, Kafirnigan, Vakhsh and Yakṣu rivers bounded on the north and west by the Hissar-Zarafshan parapet and its south-western extension which touches the Oxus near Kalif. In medieval times it comprised the territories of Badghis, Gharchistan, Guzgan, Tucharistan, Badakhshan, Ragh and Darwaz south of the Oxus, and Chaghanian, Khuttal, Karataghin and Rasht north of the Oxus. The names of some of the principalities or sub-regions of the above kingdoms appear in the Purāṇic list as detailed below:

*Purāṇic* *Medieval*

Alya Kurd = Al-Kurz
Gomanuṣya = Gonaridh
Janga = Janga Kath
Kapotaka = Murghab
Krauñcha = Karun
Kṛṣṇamgammāni
Puñjka = Karatagh
Kūṭa Kamb = Kala Khumb
Karmbhava = Karmina
Kūca = Kuza = Panjdeb
Kṛṣṇapāda = Kabadian on Kafirnigan R.
Kumudabhan = Khvar, Khuz
Kāla = Rasht-Kala
Kiṣiknidipada
Bhaumika = Basin of Kashka Darya
Madhauriya = Madhz
Mohaṅga = Mashan
Madhyachal Kūtka = Madya Mijkut
Matha Kāśika = Kushka Basin
Sunkasa = Sunkas
Surecaka = Sarakhs
Śaravaṇa = Sarvan
Vanasguj = Visagird, near Kafirnigan town
Yalatha = Yulatan, near Merv.

## CHAPTER VII

# Regions of Jambu Dwipa: Bhadravarsa

ALL the Purāṇas agree that this major region of Jambū Dwīpa extended from the eastern margin of Ilāvṛta to the eastern seaboard and was bounded by the Nīla range in the north, the Niṣadha range in the south and Devakūṭa in the west. Its area was approximately the same as that of Ketumāla and slightly less than that of Bhāratavarṣa or Uttara Kuru. This region can be easily located with the help of the topographical details given in the Purāṇas. The Purāṇic accounts, discussed below, lead one to the conclusion that it was identical with the basins of the Tarim and Hwangho rivers, i.e., the whole of Sinkiang and Northern China (see Fig. 11).

The topographical features of Bhadravarṣa are given in greater detail in the Vāyu Purāṇa than in others, although they are not presented in one place. References to the rivers, mountains, valleys and plains occur in various chapters and under different headings in that Purāṇa and one has to put this scattered information together to get a complete picture of Bhadravarṣa and adjoining regions.

The mountains forming the boundaries of Bhadravarṣa, as mentioned earlier are the Nīla and the Niṣadha. The Nīla is the Tienshen range and the Purāṇics extended it further towards the east to include the Bagdu Ula, the Barkol and the Karlik Tagh ranges in order to give it a parallelism with the southern range, the Niṣadha. As mentioned earlier the Niṣadha or rather its eastern extension is the Kunlun range, while, as will be seen later, the Devakūṭa, from all descriptions coincides with the Nan Shan and the Tsing-Ling ranges which run across China very nearly to the sea, since it is expressly mentioned in the Purāṇas that 'the lower part of this Devakūṭa mountain spreads up to the sea.'[1]

Other mountains of Bhadravarṣa and bordering regions are also mentioned in different contexts in different chapters of the Purāṇas. The text and its explanation are given below.

'On the eastern side (of Meru) there are two mountains namely the Jaṭhara and the Devakūṭa which run north to south and stretch up to the Nīla and Niṣadha mountains.'[2]

The Kuruk Tagh and Altin Tagh mountains of Sinkiang practically close the Tarim Basin on the east and if the Altin Tagh-Nan-

Shan-Tsing-Ling is taken to be the Devakūṭa which appears to be correct, Kuruk-Tagh must necessarily be the Jaṭhara of the Purāṇas. The Devakūṭa (i.e. Altin Tagh-Nan Shan-Tsing-Ling) thus fulfils both the conditions; along with Jaṭhara (Kuruk-Tagh) it joins the Nīla (Tien-Shan) and the Niṣadha (Kunlun) and also extends to the sea.

In another chapter of the Vāyu Purāṇa, the following list of mountains is given with reference to the Aruṇoda Lake which lies to the east of Meru (Pāmīrs):

> I will now describe those mountains which are located on the east of Aruṇoda Lake. The names of these mountains are the Sītānta, Kumuñja, Sudhīra, Vaikāṅga, Maniśaila, Kṛṣṇa, Mahā Nīla, Savindhu, Mandara, Reṇumāna, Sumedha, Niṣadha and Devācala.[3]

The Nīla, the Niṣadha and the Devācala (Devakūṭa) as identified earlier are obviously to the east of Meru (and incidentally, also of Aruṇoda Lake). The rest of these mountains may be identified with the help of the account of the eastern river given in the Purāṇas which runs as follows:

> This river (coming out of the Meru region) falls again on the east of Mandara. The same heavenly river after coming out from Aruṇoda Lake falls on the Śīṭānta mountain. It is then named Sīta. It is obstructed by gardens and is further divided into several branches. From the peak of the Śītānta mountain it falls on the Mukuñja (or Kumuñja) mountain. The river then falls on the Sumuñja mountain. From that mountain it falls on the Mālyavān mountain and comes to the Vaikāṅga mountain. It passes from the Vaikāṅga mountain to the Maniśaila and then ultimately falls on the Ṛsabha mountain, which is full of several caves. In this way this river passes through thousands of mountains and falls on the great Jaṭhara mountain; from there the river again falls on the Devakūta mountain. The lower part of this Devakūṭa is spreading up to the sea. In this way this river reaches the plains. The river passes through thousands of valleys, hundreds of mountains, strange forests and a variety of gardens and flows on after meeting hundreds of rivers. That great river crosses great dwīpas and after irrigating Bhadravarṣa falls into the Eastern Sea.[1]

Śītānta means 'end of cold', i.e., a range which marks the dividing line between the cold and hot regions. If the river Kizil-Su represents the headwaters of the Purāṇic river Sītā, Śītānta is obviously the Kashghar range, i.e., the last longitudinal range of the Pāmīr region facing the Tarim basin, on the east. It is a range which, to a traveller coming from the east across the hot and sandy Tarim Basin, stands athwart the route towards the west and promises a cool climate beyond. It is an effective climatic barrier which separates a hot and dry desert on the east from a cold plateau on the west. Coming from the west it literally marks the 'end of cold' and is therefore rightly qualified for its name, Śītānta.

In the above paragraph we have presumed that the Kizil-Su represents the headwaters of the Sītā river. There are strong reasons for this assumption. Firstly, the river is supposed to rise in the 'northern peaks of Meru'.[5] Secondly, it has a lake—Lake Aruṇoda—at its source and thirdly, it first of all 'falls on the east of the Mandara mountain' and thereafter on the Śītānta mountain and 'obstructed by gardens further splits into several branches'. A topographical map of the Tarim basin will show that the Tarim river receives two main tributaries from the west, i.e., the Kashghar (or Kizil-Su) and the Yārkand. Of these two the former satisfies all the three conditions mentioned above. On the other hand the Yārkand, though bigger in volume, rises behind the Kunlun range (the Niṣadha of the Purāṇas) and not in the Pāmīrs (Meru). Besides, it never crosses the two longitudinal ranges which bound Meru on the east so explicitly mentioned in the Purāṇas. We are also not aware of any lake which feeds or may have fed the Yārkand river in the past.

Once we have identified the Sītā of the Purāṇas with the Kizil-Su-Kashgar-Tarim river, the mountains of the Tarim Basin can be identified with the help of the two paragraphs quoted above from the Vāyu Purāṇa.

The lake Aruṇoda is the Kara Kul which lies on the north-eastern corner of the Pāmīrs (Meru) near the source of Kizil-Su. The Kizil-Su (Sītā) crosses the Sarikol range, (i.e., the Mandara mountain of the Purāṇas). It then 'falls' on the Kashghar range (Śītānta). As the Kizil enters the basin and reaches the town of Kashghar it receives two tributaries from the north and two from the south. The northern ones rise in the two offshoots of the Tien Shan Mt., i.e., the Sumuñja and Kumuñja, the latter being fairly extensive and running parallel to the main Tien Shan range up to the river Akṣu. The two right bank tributaries of the Kizil which meet it from the south rise in the Kungur and the Mustagh Ata—the Vaikāṅga and Malyavā of the Purāṇas respectively. As the river flows past the Kashghar town it is known as the Kashghar river which a few hundred miles down below receives the other important affluent of the Tarim, i.e. the Yārkand River, which rises behind the Mustagh range. This range is therefore the Māṇiśaila of the Purāṇas. The combined waters of the Taushkan Darya and Kim Arik rivers flow across Akṣu. The former rises north of the Tien Shan in the Vṛṣabha mountain mentioned in the Purāṇas in connection with the Northern River. The latter rises near the Khan Tengri (Mahā Nīla) peak of the Tien Shan range. Below its confluence with the Akṣu the Tarim practically receives no waters from the north or south except through minor intermittent streams, the Kanche Darya and he Quruq Darya which come down the Quruq or Kuruk Tagh ('Desert Range') or the Jaṭhara of the Purāṇics.

After 'falling' on the Jaṭhara range the river Tarim (or Sītā) takes a southerly course towards the Altin Tagh or the 'Gold Mountain', the Devakūṭa of the Purāṇas and finally ends in Lop Nor, the salt lake which lies at the foot of that range.

The Purāṇic account of the river Sītā does not end here. It presumes that the river traverses the Devakūṭa, the Altin Tagh–Nai Shan Block through underground channels, reappears on its eastern margin and flows through Bhadravarṣa to the Eastern Sea. Obviously the continuation of the Tarim towards the east refers to the Hwangho river of China. Thus the Purāṇic Sītā represents the Tarim-Hwangho rivers taken as one–uninterrupted in its career from the Pāmīrs to the Pacific Ocean.

The belief that a river passes right across a mountain chain appears to have been applied by the Purāṇics on many occasions where:

(i) two rivers flow in the same direction on the opposite sides of a mountain range, block or massif, particularly when

(ii) one river falls in a lake at the foot of the obstructing range and another river rises or flows on its opposite slope, provided the two rivers are correctly aligned; or

(iii) a lake occurs on one side of a range and the river rises near it on the opposite slope. As examples of such Purāṇic notions may be mentioned the Syr Daria and the Irtysh (Bhadrasomā), the Tarim and the Hwangho (Sītā), Karakul and Kizil-Su across the Mandara, Gilgit river–Lake Manasarovar–across the Niṣadha and the Hemakuṭa, etc.

This belief is not pecular to the Purāṇas only. The Chinese for instance represented the Tarim and Hwangho as one river. Huan Tsang says, 'This river (Sītā-Tarim) on the east enters the sea. Passing through the salt lake Yen-Tse (Lop Nor) it flows underground and emerges at the Tsih-Shi mountains (west of Lao-Chou?). It is the origin of our (Yellow) river.'[6] The Persians and the Arabs borrowed the same idea from the Purāṇas as is evident from the following passage. 'Another river Wajakh rises on the eastern side of the said mountain Mawisa at the extreme limit of the desert. It skirts the towns of Thajakh, Bariha and Kuskan, flows on through the province of Khotan and while passing through the region of Shachoer forms a swamp (Lake Lop Nor). Thence it flows down to the limits of Kucha, then passes through the province of Kursh and the province of Farjakali and empties itself into the Eastern Ocean.'[7]

In the accompanying map of the Purāṇic Bhadravarṣa or the Basin of the

Tarim—Hwangho, the names of identified topographical features which occur in the basin have been entered. Unidentified or doubtful features have been omitted.

Let us now check the above observations with the help of minor regional descriptions given under the heading 'Valleys between Mountains' in the 37th chapter of Vāyu Purāṇa. These accounts are very vivid, detailed and quite often picturesque so much so that in some cases the poet and the priest throws the bewildered geographer into entire confusion. Here are a few examples:

> There is a valley between Śītānta and Kumuñja ranges where birds sing and numerable creatures live. It is 300 Yojanas in length and 100 Yojanas in breadth. There is a lake and its water is beautiful clear and of a pleasant taste. The valley is beautified by fine-smelling lotuses. Big Durdharṣā snakes are found there. In its clear water Devas and Demons always bathe. This sacred Sri Sar is famous in heaven and Mritya Loka.... On the eastern side of the lake saints (siddha-jana) reside. There is a big and beautiful garden full of flowers and fruits. It is 100 Yojanas in breadth and 30 Yojanas in length. It is full of thousands of large trees which are half a Kos in height.... It is full of golden and green fruits, sweet-smelling and large. When they fall on the ground after ripening, the whole area is covered by them. It is known as Srivan and there are Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Yakṣas and Mahānāgas who move freely in it. In that forest Goddes Lakṣmi[8] herself resides and saints pay their respects to her.[9]

2. The next valley which is described is the one between Vikañka and Maṇiśaila:

> The Campaka forest measuring 200 Yojanas by 100 Yojanas is located between Vikañka and Maṇiśaila. Here too the saints live The flowers make the forest glow, as if it were on fire. The branches of those trees with big trunks are full of leaves which spread for about half a Kos upwards... It also contains yellow-coloured saffron... This forest is served by Demons, Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and Apsarās. Here is also the āśrama of god Kaśyapa where saints and priests are found in large numbers and the four Vedas are read.[10]

3. The third valley mentioned in the same sequence contains:

> The beautiful talwan (Palm) forest which is 50 Yojanas long and 30 Yojanas broad, lies between Mahā Nīla and Mukuñja. Palm trees are half a 'Kos' in height... It is said that Indra's King of Elephants, Airāvata used to live in this forest...[11]

The above descriptions clearly refer to three important oases which occur on the margin of the Tarim basin, where the rivers Kizil-Su, Yārkand and Akṣu enter the sandy belt of the basin from the mountains. The first of the valleys mentioned above is clearly the oasis of Kashghar, which is by far the richest in the whole of the Tarim basin. The second corresponds to the Yārkand oasis and the third is the palm forest which is located in and around Akṣu. All the 3 oases lie between 3,300 and 4,500 feet a.s.l. and are strikingly similar. The first two are much bigger and are justly famous for polar willows and their orchards and arbours with their inviting shade and their plentiful produce of fruits. It will be seen from the map that the Kashghar oasis lies between the Sītānta and Kumuñja, Yārkand between Vaikañka and Maṇiśaila and Aqsu or Akṣu between Kumuñja and Mahā-Nīla. This confirms the location of the Sītānta mountain which was identified with the Kashghar range. Similarly the relative position of the other mountains, the Kumuñja, the Vaikañka, the Maṇiśaila and the Mahā-Nīla appear to be correct with reference to these oases on the one hand and the river Tarim and its affluents on the other. It is to be noted that the last one, i.e., the Akṣu oasis which is said to be between the Mahā Nīla mountain and the Mukuñja or the Kumuñja is the only oasis which is actually located at the foot of the Tien-Shan, others are at some distance from the main ranges. The cities of Kashghar, Yārkand and Akṣu (and Khotan) have been described time and again by travellers in ancient and medieval times. Their accounts show that they, particularly the first two, have been important centres of administration, culture, trade and commerce for centuries. Their products, agricultural and mineral, had acquired fame all over the known world. The beauty of these oasis towns, their arbours and meadows, irrigation channels and lakes, houses and temples, flowers and fruits, and all these in the midst of a desert—qualified them for the epithet, 'paradise', commonly used for describing them. It is no wonder therefore that the Purāṇics honoured these 'paradises' by associating them with the Goddess Lakṣmī, God Kāśyapa and Lord Indra to keep fresh in their memories the beauties of the land which was under their influence for a long time.

Two other regions are described in the Vāyu Purāṇa with reference to the mountain mentioned earlier. It is said that:

> There is a plain which is seventy thousand Yojanas long and hundred[12] Yojanas in breadth lies between Veṇumān (or Reṇumān) and Sumedha mountains. In this plain there are no trees, creepers and gardens and no creatures live there. Only green meadows occur here and there.[13]

The extent and nature of the 'Plain' depicted above shows without any doubt that it refers to the Taklamakan desert which forms the core of the Tarim basin—the Dead Heart of Asia. The two mountains between which it lies belong to the southern rampart of the basin (i.e., the Altin Tagh) and not to the northern range (Tien-Shan), since they are not mentioned along with those mountains which flank the Tarim (Sītā) river. They are therefore the eastern and western spurs of the former between which the desert lies.

The other regions are described in the following words:

> North of Niṣadha-śaila and Deva-śaila, the ground is thickly covered with broken stones and is a thousand Yojanas long and a hundred Yojanas in breadth. Even here there are no trees and creepers, although a small amount of water spreads all over the place. Brāhmaṇas: I have described in sequence all the valleys of all shapes and sizes which are located on the east of Meru.[14]

On the southern border of the Tarim basin lies the great mountain rampart of Kunlun and the subjacent range, the Altin Tagh. The few streams which break through the outer ranges into the basin to the north run through deep-cut inaccessible gorges. The outer slopes of these mountains are extraordinarily barren and forbidding. Throughout their whole length from east to west, the foot of their northern slopes is formed by a glacis of piedmont gravel attaining in parts a width of 40 miles and more and everywhere they are utterly barren. However, a few streams which have cut across this belt of gravel support some vegetation near its outer margin. It is, therefore, clear that this region is described very precisely by the Purāṇas–as regards its position (north of Niṣadha and Devakūṭa), extent and nature.

Besides these mountains, valleys and the rivers Tarim and Hwangho (called Sītā) the Purāṇics also mention forty-two other streams of Bhadravarṣa (North China or the basin of the Hwangho)[15]. It is difficult to identify them for two reasons: (1) the Chinese names of these streams differ considerably from the Indian names; (2) the changing courses of the rivers of North China have produced a drainage pattern which is substantially different from what it was about a thousand years ago. However, the long list of rivers brings out the fact that the major part of Bhadravarṣa is a well-watered land of ample rainfall, crossed by innumerable streams irrigating a level land. This confirms the identify of Bhadravarṣa with northern China where identical conditions of rainfall and drainage prevail.

The Purāṇas deal with the population and settlements of the Tarim basin and North China (i.e., Bhadravarṣa and its eastern extension) under three heads:

(a) The oases settlements of the Tarim Basin.

(b) 'Delightful places on mountains', i.e., the settlements in the mountainous zone of this region.

(c) Population in Bhadravarṣa proper and its provinces.

Of these (a) has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. As regards (b), the distribution of population and settlement is given in the Vāyu Purāṇa as follows:[16]

(i) Sītāntā mountain (Kashghar range). The slopes of this mountain are depicted as full of waterfalls, extensive forests and abundance of flowers and fruits which make it the most desirable mountain among men and gods alike.

> A large number of creatures live in them due to abundance of food. That mountain has a large number of caves in which people live. There lies the playing ground for god Indra and there is his famous Pārijāta forest famous in all the three Lokas... Devas, Demons, Pannagas, Yakṣas, powerful Gandharvas, Siddhas, Kinnaras, etc. always play in that beautiful Indra-Vana.

It is evident that this description fits in with the Kashghar range with pleasant forested slopes, sufficient moisture and presence of precious minerals. There are no cultivated fields or terraces on the mountain, hence no compact settlements occur on its slopes, although some people live scattered in mountain caves or isolated valleys. Naturally no cities or settlements are associated with this mountain in the Purāṇas.

(ii) The Kumuñja mountain lying east (rather north-east) of the Sītāntā mountain is full of waterfalls and caves. 'On its summit there are eight big cities (āṭhpuras) belonging to demons'. The Demons signify powerful and warlike people of alien races; in this case probably Tartars, of the adjacent highlands north of Kashghar and Akṣu who live by plundering the agricultural settlement on the basin below or robbing the caravans on the Great East-West routes.

(iii) The Vajraka mountain or the northern rim of L. Bagrash and the Mahā Nīla, i.e. the Tien-Shan and its eastern offshoots also accommodated the 'Demons' (Toghuzhuza, and 'horse-faced Kinnaras' (Mongols) who live in the caves of the former mountain, and in fifteen colonies (or cities as mentioned in the Purāṇa) or on the heights of the latter range. These highlanders lived in enclosed settlements and high-walled houses in the Turfan basin and Karashahr. The description of this area is fairly accurate in the Purāṇas.

(iv) On the Veṇumāna mountain which according to our identification lies near the southern border of the Tarim basin are the 'cities of scholars'. The names of these big cities are not given but the names of their 'owners' are mentioned: On the Veṇumāna mountain there are three cities of scholars which are fifty yojanas long and thirty yojanas in breadth. Powerful like

Indra, three scholars named Uluka, Romesh and Mahā Netra are their owners'. Obviously this refers to three settlements in the Khotan-Kerya-Charchan region of the Tarim basin.

(v) The description of cities or settlements on or near the Devakūṭa range (i.e., the Altin Tagh-Nam Shan range) as given in the Purāṇas is more precise, it runs as follows:

> On the extensive peak of Maryāda mountain named Devakūṭa is the abode of Vinītanandan Suparṇa. That land stretches for about a hundred Yojanas and contains numerous majestic houses. The king of birds, Mahātmā Garuḍa resides in Salmata dwīpa where innumerable birds of Garuḍa's species live. On the southern side of that mountain there are seven strange peaks. Several big houses have been constructed there by Devas and decorated with golden garlands. There are seven cities of Gandharvas which are forty yojanas in length and thirty yojanas in breadth. Men and women live there. Powerful Agneyas and Gandharvas of powerful Kubera are the owners of these cities. On the northern peak of Bhuvana Mountain is the residence of Sanghi-Kayo who is the enemy of Devas. The outer circle of that city measures 30 Yojanas. It is inaccessible to enemies.... There is an inaccessible city of demons named Kālī Kāya full of rows of big houses of different colours on the next Maryāda mountain.[17] There are big roads and numerous houses decorated with gold and precious stones. They are always crowded by happy men and women.... The city named Sunassa is 100 Yojanas in length and 60 Yojanas in breadth and looks like a cluster of clouds. On its southern peak there is a big city stretching 60 yojanas in length and 20 yojanas in breadth which belongs to Autkatch demons, with good physique. The city which is located on the central peak of Devakūṭa mountain is full of garlands and golden furrows....[18]

This passage evidently deals with two types of cities, situated in the Altin Tagh—Nan Shan regions: (a) cities of Gandharvas; (b) cities of demons (Kāli-Kāya) and enemies of Devas (i.e., Sanghi-Kāya).

Under category (a) fall the flourishing cities which existed between the Peishan and Nan Shan massifs and which were situated on the great ancient route from the west to the east. These include important towns like Sachow, Yumen, Ansi, Suchow, Kanchow, etc. In the second category are included the Tartar and Mongol towns of Qara-Shan, Turfan and Burkol which lie away from the main route and were inhabited by powerful people of the north.

The Vāyu Purāṇa gives a list of the provinces of Bhadravarṣa proper (N.China) and mentions:

> There are several countries (in Bhadravarṣa) where a great variety of people are living. These people are looked after by several kings. In

these countries (or provinces) many powerful peoples are living. These countries are famous all around. The names of these countries located on even and uneven land are:

Sumangala, Śuddha, Candrakānta, Sunandana, Vṛajaka, Nīla Mauleya, Sauvīra, Vijaysthala, Mahāsthala, Sakāma, Mahakaśa, Sumurdhaja, Vatranāh, Sapasanga, Parivaya, Parachak, Samvakra, Mahendra, Śaivala, Satnap, Kumuda, Śakmund, Urah-Sankirṇa, Bhaurṇaka Yomaka, Vaṭsaka, Varāha, Harvahaka, Śankha, Bhavimardra, Uttara, Haibhauma, Kṛṣṇabhauma, Subhauma and Mahābhauma.

In that country (Bhadravarṣa) people of yellow colour reside. These men are good-statured and powerful.[19]

Although the names of the provinces cannot be properly identified, the long list of provinces and the general fact that Bhadravarṣa is the land of the 'yellow people' confirms that Bhadravarṣa included only North China. Southern China south of the Tsing Ling mountain which was a densely forested, rugged and inaccessible region was excluded from Bhadravarṣa. In fact South China was occupied by man more than a thousand years after he had settled down in North China.

# CHAPTER VIII Bharatavarsa : Physical

BHĀRATAVARṢA is commonly identified with the Indian sub-continent.[1] But, in fact, no comprehensive designation was given to the Indian sub-continent in ancient Indian or foreign literature. 'Sapta Saindhava' was the name given to the Punjab plains by Vedic Āryans; 'Āryāvarta' was the designation of Āryan domain in the days of Baudhāyana and Manu; the word 'Ind' or 'Indu' (Hindu) was applied by Darius and Herodotus to the Indus Valley and the Upper Gangetic region with which they were acquainted. It is only in or about the 4th century B.C. that Kātyāyana and Megasthenes give an account of approximately the whole country down to the Pāṇḍya region in the extreme south. The Epics also mention the Pāṇḍya realm in the south and the peninsulas and islands beyond the Bay of Bengal.

With the extension of the domains of Indian monarchs (for instance, Aśoka), Bhārata acquired a wider significance and it came to include the north-western lands up to the Hindūkush and south-eastern lands up to Sumātrā and Jāvā. Cunningham names it Greater India and prefers to identify the traditional nine dwīpas (or regions) of Bhāratavarṣa with regions within the Indian sub-continent as well as the peninsula and islands beyond the two Indian seas, i.e., the Bay of Begal and the Arabian Sea.

The shape and bulk of Bhāratavarṣa is given in various Purāṇas and contemporary literature where it has been variously described as a half moon, a triangle, a rhomboid or an unequal quadrilateral or like a drawn bow. Ptolemy ignores the Indian peninsula altogether and in his map the Indian coastline is represented by almost a straight line from the Gangetic delta to Makran. These various shapes have at least one common feature, the concave shape of the Himālayas (along its northern borders) which occupy the base of these figures. The shape of the Indian peninsula, i.e., the country south of the Vindhyas and its N.W. corner, i.e., North Afghanistan, were variously conceived and this gave rise to discrepancies in various descriptions. The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (Kūrmavibhāgā, Ch. 58) compares the shape of the country with that of a tortoise floating on water and facing the east. It places the various population groups on or near its face, legs, tail and body. Obviously the 'tortoise' in the above description covered the whole of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, the Kabul Valley, the western coastal region up to the source of the Godāvarī, the eastern coastal plain up to and including Kalinga and the Central Indian Plateau up to the crest of the Satpuras. The rest of the Peninsula beyond these limits is not represented in this scheme. The different shapes of Bhāratavarṣa as given in ancient literature therefore represent various stages in the process of the extension of the occupied or known areas of the country during the course of history. To say that there are inconsistencies in the Purāṇas regarding the shape of the country is thus unfair.

The topography of the country finds a prominent place in our ancient literature. This is but natural. High or steep mountains and broad and perennial rivers control and guide human movements and influence human settlement; thus from the human point of view they are very significant. The Purāṇas, therefore, always introduced regions, lands or countries, big or small by means of their important mountains and rivers. They also found it necessary to classify mountains according to their functional significance, for instance we have Maryāda parvatas (boundary mountains), Varṣa parvatas (regional mountains) Viṣkambha parvatas (subjacent mountains), Kula-parvatas (group or class mountains) and Kṣudra-parvatas (small hills). This classification is helpful in the identification of land features on a relief map of the country.

Many scholars, including those mentioned earlier, have attempted to identify and locate on a modern map of India, the relief features of Bhāratavarṣa as given in the Purāṇas. In general, they take cognizance of:

(i) The rivers which flow from particular mountains mentioned in the Purāṇas.

(ii) The tribes, people or territories (janpadas) which are associated with those features.

(iii) Corresponding description of features or reference to mountains, rivers or tribes in the Epics and contemporary Sanskrit and Pāli literature.

(iv) Description of the country by the Greek, the Chinese and other foreign writers and travellers.

(v) Archaeological records.

It is not intended to repeat the investigations of these scholars here and to treat each feature independently. It is felt that it would be more profitable to add short notes on the rivers of Bhāratavarṣa in a tabular form for the sake of convenience and ready reference and to map the important natural and cultural features of Bhāratavarṣa, keeping in view the following broad principles:

(a) The major rivers have always been the main lines of communication in the country particularly in the Great Northern Plains and as man had to depend on them for communication as well as perennial water supply, all settlements tended to occupy a site on or as near the high banks of the rivers as possible. These were the areas which have been frequented by man for a long time. Hence the accounts of features in the vicinity of river valleys should be fairly correct.

(b) On the other hand the regions of difficulty or negative areas discouraged population and settlement. Deserts, snow-clad or glaciated regions, areas of steep slopes and rugged topography, dense forests and swamps retard the processes of human occupation, therefore the accounts of such areas or topographical features situated in these environments are likely (not necessarily) to be inaccurate. Reported distances and directions in such regions have to be carefully considered and revised or discarded if necessary.

(c) A map of ancient routes particularly across difficult country is very helpful in the location of features. Generally the topographical features described in ancient literature occur on or near well established routes. Conversely, wherever two similar features answer a particular description, the one nearer the common route is more probable.

(d) To identify features with the help of the tribes or population groups which are associated with them in ancient literature is often misleading. Tribes or groups may have migrated and settled down in other regions thus associating themselves with new environments described variantly in different works.

Two base maps, one of negative areas (i.e., showing areas of dense forests, steep mountains and reserts, etc., as they were about a thousand years back) (Fig. 12) and the other of ancient routes were therefore first prepared and superimposed on a relief map in which account was taken of possible changes which the rivers might have suffered during the last 1000-1500 years. The Purāṇic topographic features were then plotted with help of these maps. In doing so, all these features which are obviously correct according to Purāṇic accounts and have been unanimously identified by scholars, have been adopted as such and plotted. Other features which required consideration have been thoroughly examined and marked in the light of the above principles. The result is the Purāṇic maps of rivers and mountains, population centres and regions. These maps which depict the major geographical features (physical, human and regional) represent the most probable picture of the land which our ancient writers had in their mind.

The mountains and rivers (not all) which have been identified and tabulated below have shown on the accompanying physiographic maps of Bhārata. The maps thus bring out the location of the seven ranges of Bhārata mentioned in the Purāṇas besides Himavat. Of these, the Sahya, the Malaya and the Mahendra Giri present no difficulty. The Pāripātra is the ring of ranges north of the Narmadā which nearly encircle the catchment areas of the Chambal and the Betwā. It corresponds with the Aravallis and the Western Vindhyas. Rikṣa-parvat represents the modern Vindhyas from the source of the Sonar to the eastern limit of the ranges which mark the cathment area of the Riven Son. The Vindhya proper of the Purāṇas included the Satpuras (south of the Narmadā), the Mahadeo Hills, the Hazaribagh Range and Rajmahal Hills and their spurs which fan out towards the Gaṅgā. It is to be noted that the three ranges Rikṣa, Vindhya and Sukhtimat (which is discussed in the following paragraphs) meet in the Mandla Knot. In this knot three corresponding E-W ranges, the Southern Maikal, the Northern Maikal and the Central ridge can be easily noticed on a modern contour map of this region (see Fig. 13).

Sūktimat, Suktimān or Suktimanta (Matsya) is one of the seven principal ranges of Peninsular India (cf. Rājaśekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*). One of the principal rivers coming down this mountain, Ṛṣikulyā has been included among the rivers flowing from the Mahendra mountain by the majority of Purāṇas while Matsya Purāṇa excludes it from the former. The Kūrma Purāṇa speaks of Trisāma, Ṛṣika (Ṛṣikulyā) and Vaṁśadhāriṇī as flowing from the Sūktimat and not from Mahendra as other Purāṇas say. This means that the Ṛṣikulyā, Pitrisomā and Vaṁśadhārā are doubtful rivers in the sense that they may be associated either with the Mahendra mountain or Sūktimat mountain. They were border cases, hence it may safely be concluded that the Mahendra and Sūktimat mountains are so close to, and so mixed up with, each other that a river or rivers may be taken as coming from one or the other mountain. Such cases are not uncommon in Purāṇic descriptions. For instance, the majority of the Purāṇas mention the Payoṣṇī, the Nirvindhyā and the Tāpī as rivers rising in the Vindhyas while the Viṣṇu Purāṇa considers them as rising in the Rikṣa mountain. Thus the inference is that the two mountains are so close to each other and their extent so undefined that some rivers may be associated with either of them. In fact the two ranges, the Vindhya and Rikṣa are so mixed up with each other that some Purāṇas give instead of a separate list of rivers from each, a composite list of rivers having their sources in both these mountains. It is also possible that there may be rivers of the same name in two entirely different regions but the Purāṇic descriptions are so clear on this point that one would like to favour the earlier conclusion, that the same rivers have been included in both the lists.

The Purāṇic list of important mountains of Bhārata follows a simple

Fig. 11

BHADRAVARṢA

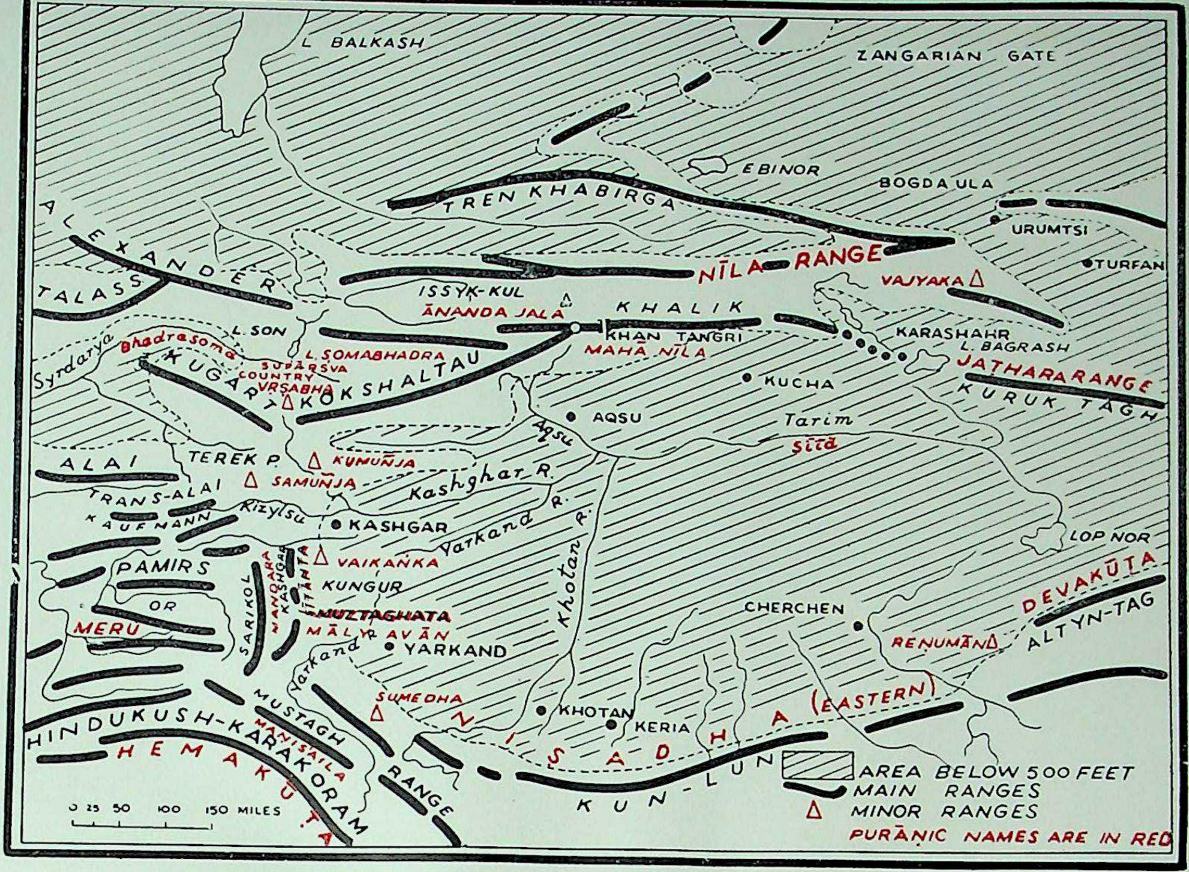

L BALKASH
ZANGARIAN GATE
EBINOR
BOGDA ULA
TREN KHABIRGA
URUMTSI
TURFAN
ALEXANDER
TALASS
NĪLA RANGE
VAJYAKA
ISSYK-KUL
ĀNANDA JALA
KHALIK
KHAN TANGRI
MAHĀ NĪLA
KARASHAHR
L. BAGRASH
JAṬHARA RANGE
KURUK TAGH
L. SON
Syrdarya
Bhadrasoma
L. SOMABHADRA
SUPĀRŚVA
COUNTRY
VṚṢABHA
KUGART
KOKSHALTAU
KUCHA
AQSU
Aqsu
Tarim
Sītā
ALAI
TEREK P.
KUMUÑJA
SAMUÑJA
Kashghar R.
TRANS-ALAI
KAUFMANN
Kizylsu
KASHGAR
Yarkand R.
Khotan R.
LOP NOR
PAMIRS
OR
MERU
SARIKOL
MANDARA
KASHGAR
ŚĪTĀNTA
VAIKAṄKA
KUNGUR
MUZTAGHATA
MĀLYAVĀN
YARKAND
Yarkand R.
CHERCHEN
DEVAKŪṬA
ALTYN-TAG
REṆUMĀN
SUMEDHA
MUSTAGH
MAṆIŚAILA
RANGE
KHOTAN
KERIA
NIṢADHA (EASTERN)
KUN-LUN
HINDUKUSH-KARAKORAM
HEMAKŪṬA
0 25 50 100 150 MILES
AREA BELOW 500 FEET
MAIN RANGES
Δ MINOR RANGES
PURĀṆIC NAMES ARE IN RED

Fig. 12

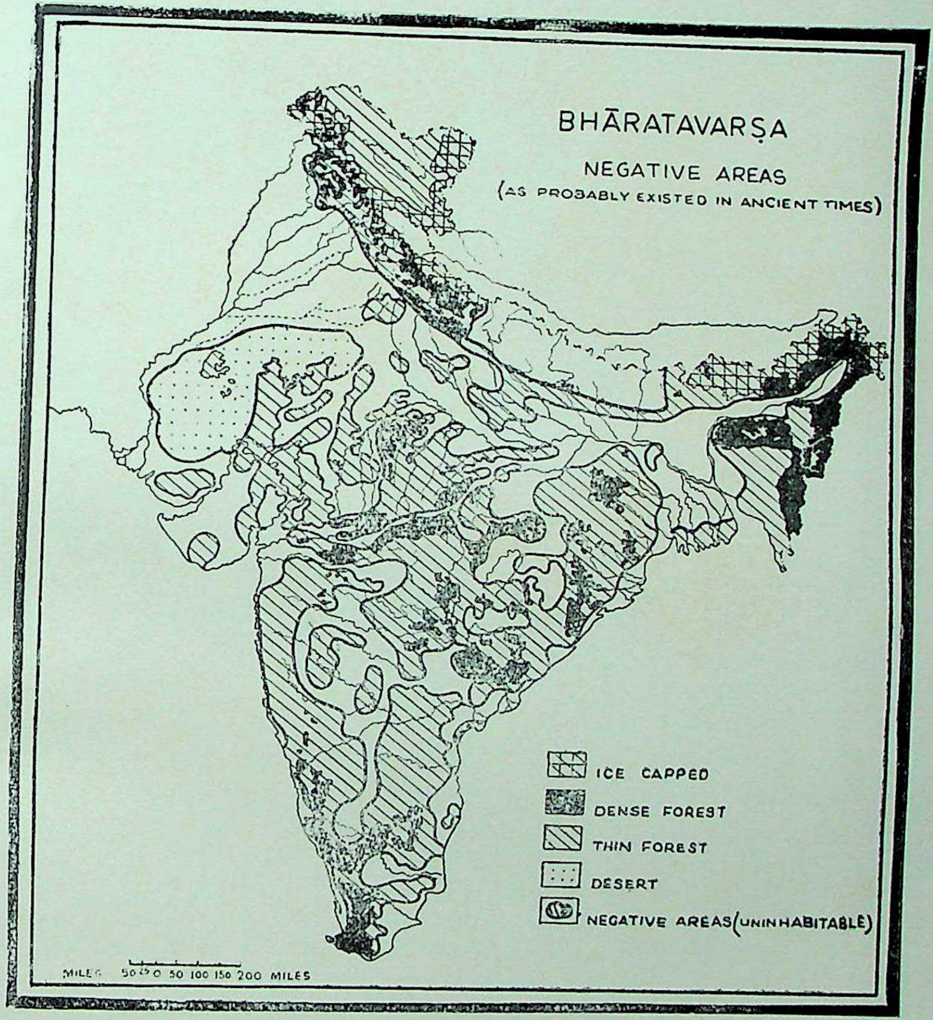
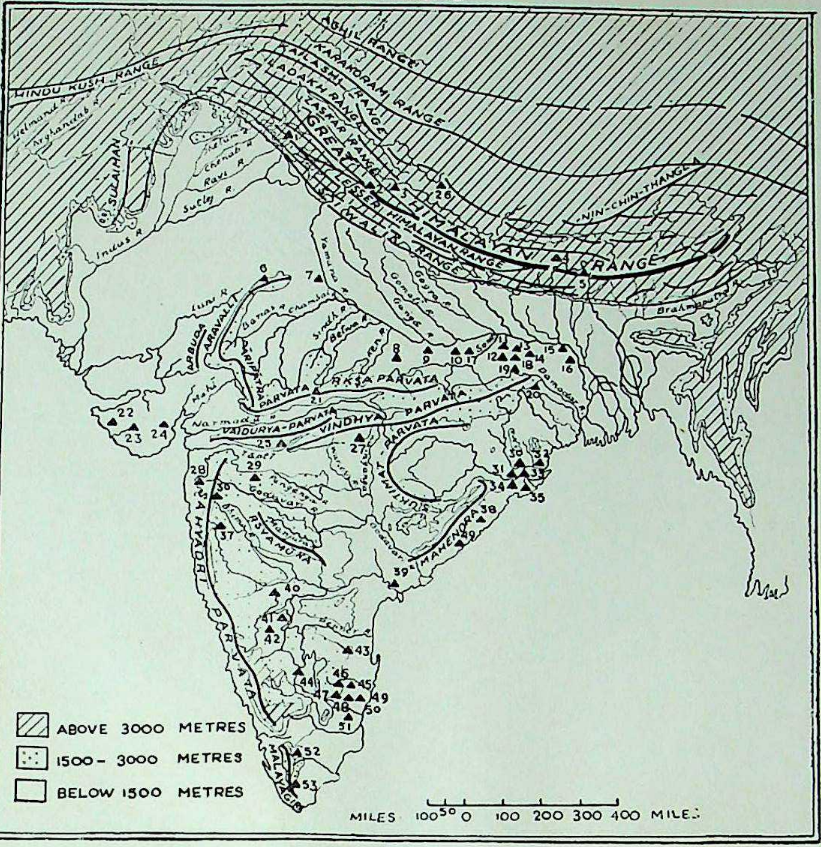

BHĀRATAVARṢA
NEGATIVE AREAS
(AS PROBABLY EXISTED IN ANCIENT TIMES)
ICE CAPPED
DENSE FOREST
THIN FOREST
DESERT
NEGATIVE AREAS (UNINHABITABLE)
MILES 50 25 0 50 100 150 200 MILES

Fig. 13

BHĀRATAVARṢA

PHYSICAL

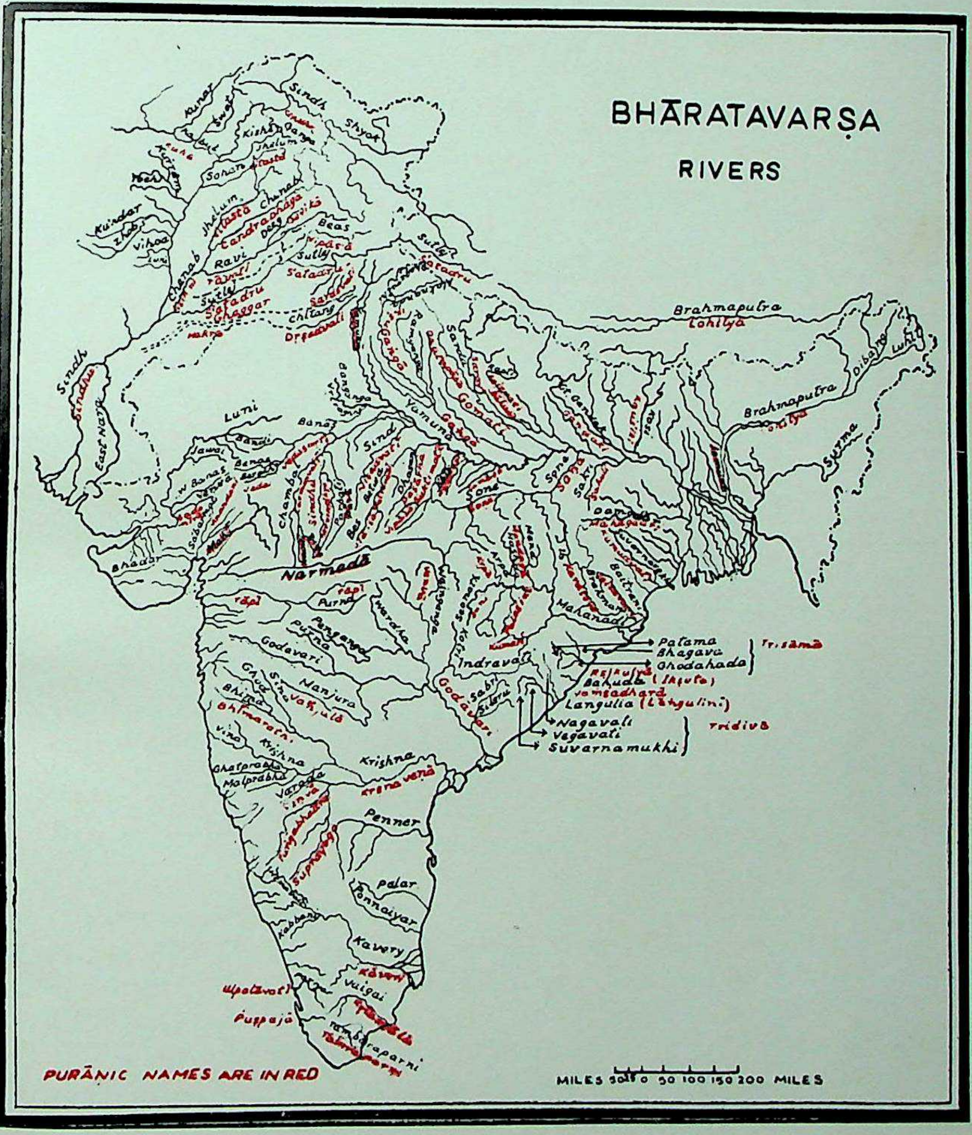

AGHIL RANGE
KAILASH RANGE
KARAKORAM RANGE
LADAKH RANGE
ZASKAR RANGE
HINDU KUSH RANGE
SULAIMAN
GREAT HIMALAYAN RANGE
LESSER HIMALAYAN RANGE
SIWALIK RANGE
NIN-CHIN-THANGLA
Helmand R.
Arghandab R.
Jhelum R.
Chenab R.
Ravi R.
Sutlej R.
Indus R.
Yamuna R.
Gomati R.
Gogra R.
Ganga R.
Brahmaputra R.
Luni R.
Banas R.
Chambal R.
Sindh R.
Betwa R.
Ken R.
Son R.
Damodar R.
Mahi
Narmada R.
Tapti
Godavari
Penganga
Wardha
Krishna
ARBUDA
ARAVALLI
PARIPATRA PARVATA
ṚKṢA PARVATA
VAIDURYA-PARVATA
VINDHYA PARVATA
ŚUKTIMAT PARVATA
ṚṢYAMUKA
SAHYADRI PARVATA
MAHENDRA
MALAYAGIRI
ABOVE 3000 METRES
1500 - 3000 METRES
BELOW 1500 METRES
MILES 100 50 0 100 200 300 400 MILES

HILLS

1 MAINĀKA
2 KALINDAGIRI
3 GANDA PARVATA
4 GOURĪŚANKARA
5 KĀÑCANA MOUNTAIN
6 UNCHA PAHAR
7 GOVARDHANA
8 CITRAKŪṬA
9 VINDHYĀCALA
10 SUṀSUMAR GIRI
11 GORAṬHGIRI
12 PRETAKŪṬA
13 NĀGĀRJUNI
14 GṚDHRAKŪṬA
15 KHALLI PAHAD
16 ANTARGIRI
17 ROHITAGIRI
18 GAVAŚĪRṢA
19 MAKULA PARVATA
20 MALLA
21 NĪCAGIRI
22 RAIVATAKA HILLS
23 ŪRJAYANTA PARVATA
24 ŚATRUÑJAYA
25 ASIRGARH
26 KAILĀŚA

27 RĀMṬEK
28 BRAHMAGIRI
29 ELLORA
30 UDAIGIRI
31 RATNAGIRI
32 LALITAGIRI
33 MAHĀVINĀYAKA
34 UDAYAGIRI
35 DHAULI
36 HARIŚCANDRAGARH
37 PURAN-DHARA
38 MAHENDRĀCALA
39 KORUKONḌA
40 ĀNANDAGANDI HILLS
41 JATINGA-RĀMEŚVARA
42 CANDRAVALLI
43 TIRUPATI
44 DEYADURGA
45 PAÑCAPĀṆḌAVAMALAI
46 BAVA HILL
47 GHATIKĀCALA
48 PUṢPAGIRI
49 SĪMĀCALAM
50 VENKAṬĀCALAMALAI
51 ŪRDHĀCALAM
52 ĀNAIMALAI
53 AGASTYAMALAI

Fig. 14


BHĀRATAVARṢA
RIVERS
Sindh
Shyok
Kunar
Swat
Kishan Ganga
Jhelum
Sohan
Vitastā
Kuram
Kundar
Zhob
Vihoa
Luni
Jhelum
Vitastā
Chenab
Candrabhāgā
Deg
Beas
Vipāśā
Ravi
Sutlej
Śatadru
Chenab
Sutlej
Śatadru
Ghaggar
Chitang
Sarasvatī
Dṛṣadvatī
Sindh
Sindhu
East Nara
Luni
Banas
Bandi
Jawai
Banas
W Banas
Sabarmati
Mahi
Chambal
Sind
Betwa
Bes
Dhasan
Yamuna
Gaṅgā
Ramganga
Sarda
Gomati
Ganga
Gandak
Kosi
Sone
Sona
Sakri
Brahmaputra
Lohitya
Brahmaputra
Lohitya
Dibang
Luhit
Surma
Damodar
Suvarnarekha
Baitrani
Brahmani
Mahanadi
Narmadā
Tāpī
Tapti
Purna
Penganga
Purna
Wardha
Wainganga
Godavari
Indravati
Sabri
Sileru
Godāvarī
Manjura
Sinā
Ghod
Bhima
Bhīmarathī
Vena
Krishna
Krishna
Kṛṣṇaveṇā
Ghatprabha
Malprabha
Varada
Tungabhadrā
Penner
Palar
Ponnaiyar
Kabbani
Kavery
Kāverī
Vaigai
Utpalāvatī
Puṣpajā
Tambraparni
Tāmraparṇī
Patama
Bhagava
Ghodahada
Trisāmā
Rṣikulyā
Bahuda
Vaṁśadharā
Langulia (Lāṅgulinī)
Nagavali
Vegavati
Suvarnamukhi
Tridivā
PURĀNIC NAMES ARE IN RED
MILES 50 25 0 50 100 150 200 MILES

but natural pattern. These ranges are nothing but the watersheds which bound wholly or partly the catchment areas of important rivers of Bhāratavarṣa. For instance, the catchment areas of the Gaṅgā, the Sindhu and the Lohitā (Brahmaputrā) are associated with the Himavat; those of the Godāvarī, the Kṛṣṇā and the Kāverī with the Sahya; those of the Tāptī, Narmadā (Viṣṇu Purāṇa) and the Baitaraṇī with the Vindhyas, etc. The only important river whose catchment area is not covered by the Himavat, the Sahya, the Mahendra, the Malaya, the Rikṣavat and the Vindhya is the Mahānadī, a considerable river system which is not accounted for in the general pattern of Purāṇic topographical description. Therefore the Sūktimat, the remaining range from the Purāṇic list is very likely the one which is associated with the basin of the Mahānadī.

In the topographical map of Bhārata, the Sūktimat mountain is shown as a ring of ranges that encircle the Mahānadī basin which very nearly concides with the present Mahākosala and the Purāṇic Dakṣiṇa-Kosala. The northern and north-western portion of this divide coincides with the southern Maikala range, the southern and eastern with the hills of Kanker and Sambalpur. The rivers which flow from the Sūktimat are given by the Purāṇas as the Ṛṣikulyā or the Kā'sika (Matsya), the Kumārī or the Sūkamārī, the Mandagā, the Manda Vāhinī, the Kṛpā or Kūpā and the Palaśinī (Paiṣiṇī). The Vāmana Purāṇa adds two more, the Sunī and the Sudāmi (see Table below). Of these the Mandagā is probably the river Maṇḍ, a left-bank tributary of the Mahānadī which itself is represented in the list as the Manda Vāhinī. The Kṛpa is the Arpa which joins the Seonath or the Sūnī, a considerable river, and their combined waters fall into the Mahānadī from the north. The Palaśinī is either the Jonk, a right-bank tributary of the Mahānadī on which the town Paraswani stands and reminds one of the name of the river Palaśinī or the bigger river Pairi which after joining the Sandur (or Sudami?) meets the Mahānadī at Rajim. The former is more probable since the main route from the coast into the Mahānadī basin crossed the river at Sankra while the latter was far away from the established route.

These and other rivers of Bhāratavarṣa listed in the Purāṇas have been tabulated on the following pages. The Table gives their names as given in different Purāṇas as well as short notes where necessary on some of them. These notes are intended to supplement those already given in earlier works. It will be seen that in the identification of features, geographical relationships are given more importance than the accounts of these features found elsewhere.

## RIVERS FROM THE HIMAVAT PARVATA

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | RV | Vy | Mts | Br | | |
| Gaṅgā | S | S | S | S | Gaṅgā | |
| Saraswatī | S | S | S | S | Saraswatī | Bet. the Yamunā and the Sutlej. In ancient times the Saraswatī-Ghaggar-Hakra-Nara formed a considerable stream, known as the Saraswatī. |
| Sindhu | S | S | S | S | Sindh (Indus) | |
| Candrabhāgā | Askinī | S | S | S | Chenāb | Candra and Bhāgā are its headwaters. |
| Yamunā | S | S | S | S | Yamunā | |
| Śatadru | Śatudri | S | S | S | Sutlej | |
| Vitastā | S | S | S | S | Jhelum | |
| Irāvatī | Parusni | S | S | S | Rāvī | |
| Kuhū | Kubhās | S | S | S | Kabul | |

The abbreviations used in this table and other following tables are as under:

S = Same as in the first column
O = Omitted
RV = Ṛgveda
Mārk = Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
Mts = Matsya Purāṇa
Vy = Vāyu Purāṇa
Br = Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa
Krm = Kūrma Purāṇa
Var = Varāha Purāṇa

*Note*: The names of the rivers and their order of enumeration vary slightly in different Purāṇas. The RV list of the Himālayan rivers runs as follows: Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Saraswatī, Sutudri, Vipāśā, Parusni, Askinī, Marudṛidhā, Vitastā Arjikiya, Susomā, Trisāmā, Susartu, Sveti, Sindhu, Kubha, Gomatī, Krumu, Mehatnu (RV, X, 75, 5, 6). Here the order is from Gaṅgā towards the west and all the rivers of the north-west and their major tributaries occur in the same order

*RIVERS FROM THE HIMAVAT PARVATA (Contd.)*

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gomatī | S | S | S | S | Gomatī | On which Lucknow is situated. It is different from the RV. Gomati (= Gomal). |
| Dhutapāpā | O | S | S | S | Sāradā | With its head-streams. |
| Bāhudā | O | S | S | S | Rapti | |
| Dṛśadvatī | S | S | S | S | Chitang | A tributary of the Ghaggar between the Yamunā and the Sutlej. |
| Vipāśā | S | S | Viśālā | S | Beas | |
| Devikā | O | S | S | S | Deeg | A tributary of the Ravi (right bank). |
| Sarayū | O | S | S | S | Gogra | |
| Raṅkṣu | O | Ikṣu | Ikṣu | | Rāmagaṅgā | Ikṣu appears to be correct reading. |
| Niścirā | O | S | Niścala | Nirvīrā<br>Nisvīrā<br>Nicitā | | |
| Gaṇḍakī | O | S | S | S | Gaṇḍak | |
| Kauśikī | O | S | S | S | Kosī | With its three headwaters Dudh Kośī, Sun Kośī and Tamba Kośī. |
| | O | Trityā | Trityā | Trityā | | |
| | O | Lohityā | Lohityā | Lohityā | Brahmaputra | |

---

in the list. Except the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, no river of the Gangetic system is represented here. Alberuni's list of these rivers is based on the Purāṇas but in it we find a sequence from west to east. This sequence has been helpful in identifying some of the rivers in the Purāṇic list. His list runs as follows: Siṅdh, Biyatta, Candraha, Biyāha, Irāvatī, Śatarudra, Sarsat (Saraswatī), Jaun (Yamunā), Gaṅga, Sarayū, Devikā Kuhu, Gomatī, Dhūtpāpā, Visālā, Bāhudāsa, Kausikī, Niscīrā, Gaṇḍakī, Lohitā. For the identification of these rivers, the following two facts were kept in mind:

(a) These rivers are perennial, they rise from 'snow-clad' ranges and
(b) they rise from the Himālayas. Rivers which do not fulfil these conditions were discarded.

## *RIVERS FROM THE PĀRIPĀTRA PARVATA*

| | *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | *Present names* | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Vedasmṛti | S | S | S | Vedāsinī<br>Veda | Banās | It is surprising that scholars who attempted to identify the rivers issuing from the Pāripātra Parvata did not realise that their identifications ignored the rivers of the Matsya Country—one of the most ancient, flourishing and important janapadas of Madhyadeśa. In the past, the rivers of this region carried more water and were perennial. Vairat, the capital of the Matsyas was located where the headwaters of the Bangangā and Sabi meet. |
| Vedavatī | S | Vetravatī | S | Vedaratā<br>(*Krm*) | Berach | |
| Vṛtraghnī | S | S | S | Vrataghnī<br>(*Krm*) | Banganga-Utangan. | |
| Sindhu | S | S | S | Tridivā | Kālī Sindh | |
| Veṇvā | Varṇāsā | Parṇāśā | Varṇāsā | | W. Banās | Which flows west of the Aravallis. |
| Nandanī | Candanā | Narmadā | Candanā | Bandhanā<br>(*Krm*) | Sābarmatī | |
| Sadānīrā | Satīrā | Kāverī | S | Sadātīrā,<br>Pāvanī | Saraswatī | The Saraswatī was once an important stream. It formed the boundary between the 'Western' and 'North-Western' countries of the Purāṇas. |

*RIVERS FROM THE PĀRIPĀTRA PARVATA (Contd.)*

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mahī | Mahatī | S | S | Manoramā,<br>Rohi | Mahī | |
| Pārā | S | S | S | | Parbati | |
| Carmaṇvatī | S | Dhanvatī | S | | Chambal | 'Like a rainbow' (Dhanvatī). |
| Nūpī | O | Rūpā | O | Sura<br>Sūrya<br>Tapi<br>Lūpā | Gambhir | Rūpā appears to be correct. Tributary of the Yamunā on which Rupabas is located. |
| Vidiśā | S | Viduṣā | S | | Bes | Beśnagar (Vidiśā) is situated on it. |
| Vetravatī | S | Veṇumatī | S | | Betwa | |
| Śiprā | S | S | S | | Śiprā | Of Ujjain. |
| Avarṇī | Avantī | Avantī | Avantī | | Avantī | Rises near Mhow. |

## RIVERS FROM THE ṚKṢA PARVATA (FROM PĀRIPĀTRA : VĀYU)

| Purāṇic names of rivers | | | | | Present names | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Śoṇa | S | S | S | | Sone | It is obvious that none of these rivers rises from the Purāṇic Ṛkṣa Mt. (see Map). The Matsya Purāṇa very correctly omits them altogether. However, whenever these rivers are named, they are qualified by the expression 'Suratha-Adrija' which means that (although they are mentioned in this list) they actually rise from or near about Amarkaṇṭak or (Suratha-Adri). |
| Mahānada | S | S | S | Jyotiratha (*Var.*) | Mahānadī | |
| Narmadā | S | S | S | | Narmadā | |
| Mandākinī | S | S | S | | Mandākinī | |
| Daśārṇā | S | S | S | | Dhasan | All these rivers belong to the Bundelkhand Region. As they carry 'coloured stones or gravel', they are all qualified by the expression Citrotpālā which is added at the end of their list. |
| Citrakūṭā | S | S | S | | Citrakūṭā | |
| Tamasā | S | S | S | | Tons | |
| Pippaliśroṇī | S | –śyenī | S | Pippala | Paisuni | |
| Piśācikā | Piśābikā | O | S | | | |
| Karamodā | Kartoyā | O | Kartoyā | | Karamnāśā | |

## *RIVERS FROM ṚKṢA PARVATA* (*Contd.*)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Citrotpalā | Nīlotpalā | Citrotpalā | Citotpalā | Citrotpalā | | |
| Vipāśā | S | Vimalā | S | Viśālā<br>Mahāvegā | Bewas | Near Sagar in Madhya Pradesh. |
| Vañjulā | Jambulā | Cañcalā | Jambūlā | Mañjulā<br>Vañjulā | Jamni | A tributary of the Betwa. Jambūlā is more correct. |
| O | Bāluvāhinī | Dhūtvāhinī | Bāluvāhinī | Ratnavāhinī | Baghain | A tributary of the Yamunā, on which Kalinjar is situated. |
| Sume-Rujā | Siterajā | Śunīlajjā | Siterajā | O (*Krm*) | Sonar-Bearma | Tributaries of the Ken river. |
| Śuktimatī | S | S | S | O (*Krm*) | Ken | |
| Śakulī | Makṣuṇā | Mukuṭā | Makṣuṇā | Pankini<br>Makṣuṇā | Sakri | Meets the Gaṅgā between Patna and Monghyr |
| Tridivā | S | Hradikā | S | | | |
| Kramu | Kramāt | O | Kramāt | Kramah | | |

## *RIVERS FROM THE VINDHYA PARVATA*

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Śiprā | Madrā | Kṣiprā | Madrā | Śīghrodā<br>Sighra | Śiprā | On which Ujjain is situated. The first three rivers actually rise in the Pāripātra Range and not from the Vindhyas. |
| Pyoṣṇī | S | S | S | From Ṛkṣa (*Vāman*)<br>Payolli | | |
| Nirvhindhyā | S | S | S | Newaj | Newuj | Between Ujjain and Vaitravati (Meghadūta). |
| Tāpī | S | S | S | | Tāptī | |
| Niṣadhāvatī | Niṣadhā | Ṛṣabhā | Nishadanadī | Mahānadī (*Krm*) | Sind | The river on which Narwar, the capital of Niṣadhas was located. |
| Veṇvā | S | Veṇā | S | Vinna | Waingaṅgā | |

## *RIVERS FROM THE VINDHYA PARVATA (Contd.)*

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vaitaraṇī | S | S | S | | Baiṭrani | |
| Sinīvālī | Śitibāhu | Viśva-mālā | Śitibāhu | Satabala Vedipala | | |
| Kumudvatī | S | S | S | | Suvarṇa-rekha | |
| Karatoyā | Toyā | Toyā | Toyā | Brah-māṇī | Brāhmaṇī | Although Karatoyā is the present name of a Himālayan river in West Bengal, it is not indicated here since this river rises from Vindhya. |
| Mahāgaurī | S | S | S | | Damodar | This is the only river which is 'full of rocks' (Antasira) and is 'difficult to encounter' (Durgama) on account of floods, etc. |
| O | O | O | O | Purna (Padma) | Purna | A tributary of the Tāptī |

*RIVERS FROM THE SAHYA PARVATA*

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Godāvarī | S | S | S | | Godāvarī | |
| Bhīmarathā | Bhīma-rathī | Bhīma-rathī | Bhīma-rathī | | Bhīmā | |
| Kṛṣṇaveṇvā | S | Kṛṣṇa-veṇī | S | | Kṛṣṇa | |
| Veṇvā | Vaiṇī | O | Veṇu<br>Vīṇā,<br>Vinna | Varṇa, | Veṇā | Vīṇā appears to be the correct reading. It is a headwater tributary of the Kṛṣṇa. It cannot be the Penner which does not rise from the Sahya Parvata. |
| Tuṅgabhadrā | S | S | S | | Tuṅga-bhadrā | |
| Suprayogā | S | S | S | | Vedavatī (Hagari) | 'Easy to bathe in', i.e., shallow with low banks and free from floods and gravel. |
| Bāhyā | O | S | O | Varada (*Agni*) | Varadā | The reading in Agni Purāṇa is correct. |
| Kāverī | S | S | S | | Kāverī | |
| O | Vañjulā | Vañjulā | Vañjulā | | Mañjīrā | |

### *RIVERS FROM THE MALAYA PARVATA*

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Kṛtamālā | S | S | S | Ṛtumālā<br>Satamālā<br>Katamālā | Vaigai | It is a river which makes a broad 'garland-like' semi-circle. This points to Vaigai R. Besides, its alternative name 'Katamala points to its source, the Kottai-Malai Peak at the junction of the Varushnad and Cardamom Hills. |
| Tāmraparṇī | Tāmra-varṇā | S | S | | Tāmraparṇī | It is the most important river of Tamilnad in the sense that it is the only perennial river of this region. |
| Puṣpajā | Puṣpajātī | S | Puṣpajātī | Puṣpavatī | Pambiar | Puṣpagiri is a part of the Malaya Range from which the Kṛtmālā rises (Mārk. and Viṣṇu). Puṣpajā ('full of flowers') represents the river which flows down the 'flowery' western slope of the range. |
| Satpalāvatī | Utpalā-vatī | Utpalā-vatī | Punpal-vatī | Utpala-vati | Periyar | This river which does not contain much silt but carries 'stones' or small boulders along its bed (Utpalvatī) represents the Periyar in Kerala which is a hilly perennial stream rising from the western slopes of the Uttamapālaiyam trough. |

### *RIVERS FROM THE MAHENDRA PARVATA*

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Pitṛsoma | Trisāmā | Tribhāgā | Trisāṃā | Trisāmā | Ghodahada<br>Bhagava<br>Patama | The three headwaters of the Ṛṣikulyā collectively known as Tribhāgā. |
| Ṛṣikulyā | Ṛtukulyā | S | S | S | Ṛṣikulyā | (See also under Śūktimat Mt.) |
| Ikṣukā | Ikṣulā | Ikṣudā | Ikṣulā | Ikṣulā | Bahuda | On which Icchapuraṁ is located. |
| Tridivā | S | S | S | | Vegavatī<br>Nagavati<br>Suvarṇamukhī | The three headwaters of the Lāṅgūlinī collectively known as Tridiva. |
| Lāṅgūlinī | O | O | S | Mulinī<br>Lamulni | Lāṅguliā | |
| Vaṁśakarā | Vaṁśadharā | S | S | | Vaṁśadharā | |

*RIVERS FROM THE SŪKTIMAT PARVATA*

| *Purāṇic names of rivers* | | | | | *Present names* | *Notes* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mārk | Vy | Mts | Br | Others | | |
| Ṛsikulyā | Ṛsīkā | Kāśikā | Ṛsikā | | Ṛsikulyā | Same as for Mahendra Parvata river of the same name. |
| Kumārī | Sukumārī | Sukumārī | Sukumārī | | Suktel | 'With a narrow valley'. Joins Mahānadī at Sonpur (Orissa). |
| Mandagā | S | S | S | | Mand | |
| Mandavāhinī | S | S | S | | Mahā-nadī (Proper) | |
| Kṛpā | Kūpā | S | S | | Arpa | |
| Palāśinī | S | Pāśinī | S | | Jonk | On which Paraswanī is located (Raipur Dist., M.P.). |
| O | O | O | O | Suni (*Vāmana*) | Seonath | |
| O | O | O | O | Sandur (*Vāmana*) | Sudāmā | Which meets the Mahānadī at Rajim. |

# CHAPTER IX Bharatavarsa: Regional Classification

BHĀRATAVARṢA, according to Purāṇic cosmography, was divided into '*nava khaṇḍas*' or nine divisions or units. According to Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa they are:

*Indradwīpaḥ Kaserumāns-Tāmraparṇo Gabhastimān*
*Nāgadwīpa stathā Saumyo Gandharvo Varuṇas tathā*
*Ayam tu navamastesām dwīpaḥ sāgarasvrtaḥ*[1]
*Yojanānām sahasram vai dwīpo yaṁ dakṣiṇottarāt*
*Brāhmaṇaḥ Kṣatriyā Vaiśyāḥ Śūdraścantaḥs Thitā dvijā*[2]

These nine 'bhedas' or 'khaṇḍas' of Bhāratavarṣa are mentioned also in the famous astronomical work, the *Siddhānta Śiromaṇi* (III. 41) of the celebrated astronomer Bhāskarācārya, as well as in the majority of Purāṇas. The Vāmana and the Garuḍa Purāṇas, however, replace Saumya and Gandharva by Kataha and Simhala. The ninth dwīpa which is described as 'encircled by seas', 'extending over a thousand yojanas from north to south,[3] with Kiratas at the eastern extreme and Yavanas (or Ionians) at the western end and Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śudras residing in between', is not mentioned by name in the majority of the Purāṇas. The name is supplied by the Vāmana Purāṇa as Kumāra (XIII. ii) and by the Kumarīka Khaṇḍam of the Skanda Purāṇa as Kumarīka (30, 60). The *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* of Rājaśekhara also gives the name of the ninth dwīpa as Kumāri (Daśavibhāga, p. 92). The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa along with other Purāṇas describes the nine dwīpas as 'separated by seas and as being mutually inaccessible' (Samudrantarita jneyaste tvagamyah parasparam, Mārk. 575).

As details of these nine khaṇḍas are lacking in the Purāṇas, there has been a lot of speculation and a great deal of disagreement among scholars regarding their identification. Thus, Alberuni identifies Indradwīpa with Madhyadeśa, i.e., the Middle Country (*Indica* I, p. 296), while Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* places it between Laṅka and the Mahendra hills (III. p. 31) which somewhat agrees with the location of the dwīpa as described in Skaṇda Purāṇa. Majumdar identifies it with Burma. The next dwīpa, Kaserumat, is placed by Alberuni to the east of Madhyadeśa, and by Abul Fazl, between the Mahendra and Sukti hills. Majumdar identifies it with the Malay Peninsula. The third dwīpa, Ṭāmravarṇa or (Tāmraparṇa or Tāmraparṇī) is placed in the south-east by Alberuni and between Sukti and Malaya by Abul Fazl. It has been identified by some scholars with the region drained by the river Tāmraparṇī in the extreme south, and by others with Ceylon which the Greek geographers knew as Taprobane, and is referred to in the inscriptions of Asoka as Tāmbapanni. Gabhastimat, according to Abul Fazl, lay between the Rakṣa and the Malaya, and according to Alberuni, to the south of the Madhyadeśa. According to Smith, Nāgadwīpa seems to be identical with the Jāffna Peninsula of Ceylon.[4] Saumya has not been identified, but Kataha which is the substitute reading in the Vāmana Purāṇa has been identified by some with Kedah in the Malaya Peninsula. Gandharva is placed by Alberuni to the north-west of the Madhyadeśa; it could be the well-known and ancient region of Gandhara. Garuḍa Purāṇa reads Simhala (instead of Gandharva) which probably indicates Ceylon. Varuṇa, the eighth dwīpa, is placed by Abul Fazl between the Sahya and the Vindhya. Cunningham[5] suggests that these nine khaṇḍas belong to greater India, i.e., Greater Bhāratavarṣa which included the islands and peninsula of the East Indies and not to Bhārata proper. Thus he identifies the nine khaṇḍas with Burma, Malaya Peninsula, Jāvā, Sumātrā, Ceylon, etc.

The above paragraphs show that there is much confusion about the location of the nine khaṇḍas of the Purāṇas. To make sense out of this confusion, it will first be necessary to marshall all the facts which are given in any Purāṇa and which are directly or indirectly related to the extent and location of Bhāratavarṣa and its 'nava khaṇḍas'. For this purpose we tentatively select Vāyu Purāṇa since it gives practically all the details necessary for our discussion in a logical sequence. The Vāyu Purāṇa mentions the following facts:

1. Bhāratavarṣa lies north of the 'sea' and south of Himavān (45, 75).

2. 'It is 9,000 yojanas in extent from Kumarikya to the Gaṅgā and from north to south' (45, 81). This statement is in accordance with the general regional pattern of Jambū Dwīpa in which each regional belt between the principal mountain chains is 9,000 yojanas in width.

3. 'Indradwīpa, Kaserumat, Tāmravarṇa, Gabhastimān Nāgadwīpa, Saumya, Gandharva and Varuṇa are the eight khaṇḍas of Bhāratavarṣa' (45, 79). Although the name of the ninth khaṇḍa is not given, the total number of the khaṇḍas is nine (45, 78). The ninth khaṇḍa extends for 1,000 yojanas (45, 80). On its east live Kiratas, on its west, Yavanas, and in its centre, Brāhmanas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras.

4. 'They (the khaṇḍas) are all surrounded by sea and are therefore mutually inaccessible' (45, 78).

5. 'He who conquers and holds all of them is called Samrāt or Emperor' (45, 86).

6. Thereafter paras 86-137 of chapter 45 of the Vāyu Purāṇa give details of the regional mountains (Kul-Parvatas), rivers and people of Bhāratavarṣa. Then follow chapters 46 and 47 which deal with the regions lying north of Bhāratavarṣa, i.e. the Trans-Himālayan regions. Chapter 48 specifically describes 'the lands south of Bhāratavarṣa' which clearly implies that these lands are not included in Bhāratavarṣa but lie outside its limits to its south. The contents of this chapter have been examined and fully discussed in a later chapter. It brings out the important fact that the islands anl peninsulas of South-Eastern Asia lay beyond the limits of Bhāratavarṣa.

Para 6 above, therefore, at once disproves the contention of Cunningham, Majumdar and others who supposed that Bhāratavarṣa, in the context of its nine divisions, meant Greater India and included the Malay Peninsula and the islands of the East Indies. It is true that the Indian monarchs at one time ruled over South-Eastern Asia but the facts enumerated above show that the Purāṇas clearly distinguished between India proper or Bhāratavarṣa and the islands or dwīpas which lie to the south-east of it.

We have therefore to find the nine khaṇḍas of Bhāratavarṣa within India proper which satisfy statements 1-4 mentioned above. But, statement 4, if taken literally as it has been taken by many scholars, apparently presents an anomaly. How can we divide Bhāratavarṣa into regions 'surrounded by sea' and 'mutually inaccessible'? This anomaly is resolved if we take a broader and more rational view of the statement which may be analysed as follows:

(i) 'Surrounded by sea' actually means 'surrounded wholly or partially by a sheet of water'. This sheet of water may be a sea, an arm of a sea or even a broad and deep river which is normally difficult to cross.

(ii) 'Inaccessible' means 'difficult of access' wholly, on account of a vast or deep expanse of water surrounding the region or partly on account of water and partly on account of other natural obstacles (e.g., thick forests, high mountains, swamps or deserts). For example, the Makran coast is 'inaccessible' to the rest of India since it is surrounded on one side by a sea, on another side by the water of the Indus and on the remaining sides by barren hills or sandy plains. Again, the land beyond the lower Brahmaputrā is 'difficult of access', since its broad and deep valley separates the eastern region from the rest of India.

Let us, therefore, first of all find those regions of India which are difficult of access from the Gangetic plain by virtue of the fact that they are bounded by a large river or a sea and are normally 'inaccessible' on account of these alone or in conjunction with other natural obstacles. The physical map of India, read with the map of 'Negative Areas', shows that these regions are:

(a) the Trans-Indus and the Trans-Brahmaputra regions of India;

(b) the western and the eastern coastal plains; and

(c) Peninsular India.

To the above-mentioned observations let us add the following information which may be helpful in the identification of many (if not all) of the 'nava khaṇḍas' of Bhāratavarṣa:

(i) The Western or Arabian Sea has long been known as the abode of Varuṇa just as the Eastern (or Bay of Bengal) was considered as the abode of Lakṣmī. Therefore, Varuṇa Khaṇḍa is likely to have been located on the coast of the Arabian Sea.

(ii) Gandharva Khaṇḍa appears to be related to the ancient Gandharva land and may therefore be located in the Trans-Indus region of India.

(iii) Tāmravarṇa Khaṇḍa (Tāmraparṇa according to Kūrma and Tāmraparṇī according to Matsya) appears to be associated with the River Tāmrapani which rises in the Malaya range.

(iv) Indra is the god of rain. The monsoonic rain-bearing winds in northern India come from the east. The track of tropical cyclones which cause rains there runs from the apex of the Bay of Bengal up the Gangetic Delta to the Gangetic Plains from east to west. Indradwīpa, therefore, in all likelihood, indicates a region beyond the Brahmaputra in the east. Garuda Purāna expressly mentions that it lies beyond the Mahendra range.

(v) The Vāmana and Garuḍa Purāṇas substitute Kataha and Simhala for Saumya and Gandharva. This most probably implies that in a later period of Indian history, the Trans-Indus regions were lost to India, were consequently considered extra-Indian and dropped from the list. Their place was taken by regions added by territorial acquisitions in the south and west. Kathiawar (Kataha) and Ceylon (Simhala), it appears, were added to the traditional list as the two new khaṇḍas or regions of India.

(vi) The Nāgas or serpent-worshippers figure in a semi-mythical way in the early epic traditions. In protohistoric times, they are mentioned as people associated with various mountainous regions called after the names of serpent-kings like Vāsuki, Karkotaka, Ananta, Śeṣa, Saṁkhacūda, Puṇḍarīka and Takṣaka. Their daughters were married to epic heroes like

Arjuna and Kuśa, son of Rāma. Nāga colonies and kingdoms therefore extended all over the mountainous belt between the Narmadā and the Godāvarī along the Vindhya and the Satpura up to the Chhotā-Nāgpur plateau.

Considering all the points mentioned above and the inaccessible or partly-accessible natural regions of India detailed above, we may conclude that:

Tāmravarṇa = the sector of the Indian peninsula south of the Kāverī.
Indra = the Trans-Brahmaputra region.
Kaserumat = the coastal plain between the deltas of Godāvarī and Mahānadī.
Gabhistimān = the hilly belt between the Narmadā and the Godāvarī.
Saumyo = the coastal belt west of the Indus.
Gandharva = the cis-Indus region.
Varuṇa = the western coast of India.

The Purāṇic 'nava khaṇḍas' mentioned above are comparable to the division of Bhāratavarṣa into nine bhedas by the celebrated astronomers Parasara and Varāhamihira.[6] These astronomers conceived the shape of India as that of a tortoise (Kūrma) lying outspread; they therefore describe the country as Kūrma-cakra. Each of the nine bhedas is called a 'varga' by Varāhamihira; Bhāratavarṣa is thus divided into nine parts conforming to nine of the ten points of the compass, e.g., the central, eastern, southern, western, northern, south-eastern or Agneya, south-western or Nairata, north-western or Vayava and north-eastern or Arsana. Pāncāla was the main district in the central division, Magadha in the eastern, Pulinda in the north-eastern, Madra in the northern, Harahaura (Hara Huna) in the north-western, Sindhu in the western, Anarta in the south-western, Avanta in the southern and Kaliṅga in the south-eastern (Bṛhat Saṁ., XIV, 32, 33,). But when Varāhamihira describes details, he assigns Sindhu and Sauvira in the south-western division (Nairata) along with Pahlava and Kamboja and evidently Anarta also (*ibid,* XIV. 17). These details are also supported by the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, which assigns both Sindhu-Sauvira and Anarta to the south-west.

The Purāṇas as well as the Mahābhārata give and follow a simpler though less scientific regional division of Bhāratavarṣa, i.e., its division into 5 or 7 regions. The division of India into five regions is as old as the Atharvaveda (XIX. 17. 1-9) and the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VIII. 14), and was adopted by the later Brāhmaṇical and Buddhistic authorities.[7] Thus Smṛti writers like Baudhāyana seem to suggest a fivefold division while Rājaśekhara in his Kāvyamīmāṁśa actually adopts it. Buddhist writers like Yuan Chwang and the authors of earlier texts also follow the same division. The Mahābhārata also describes five divisions in detail, the central or Madhyadeśa, the eastern, southern, western and northern and at least three Purāṇas, the Matsya, Vāyu and Viṣṇu, agree with it. According to the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Madhyadeśa was occupied by the Kurus and Pāñcālas, the east by the people of Kāmarūpa, the south by the Puṇḍras, Kaliṅgas and Magadhas, the west by the Saurāṣtras, Suras, Abhiras, Arbudas, Karusas, Mālavas, Sauviras and Saindhavas, and the north (?) by the Hunas, Salvas, the people of Sakala, Ambasthas, Parasikas, Ramas, etc. (Wilson's Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Vol. II. Bk. II. 3. p. 132); there is, however, no mention of the northern division in the text but it is nevertheless evident. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa list of countries is very meagre; the Mahābhārata has a much longer catalogue, but it is without any arrangement; so also is the Padma Purāna.

The longest list of countries and peoples of India given under this regional scheme is, however, contained in the Mārkaṇḍeya, the Brahmāṇḍa and the Vāyu Purāṇas. Both the Mārkaṇḍeya and the Brahmāṇḍa refer to the territorial divisions of India (Kumaridwīpa) as numbering seven, the latter expressly stating that in ancient times Bhāratavarṣa was divided into seven regions (sapta khaṇḍam).[8] But this division into seven regions is not in any way fundamentally different from the division into five which is adopted by the majority of the Purāṇas, and the Mahābhārata. This will be evident from the lists of the divisions which are as follows: the Madhyadeśa, the Udicya or north, the Prācya or east, the Dakṣināpatha or south the Aparānta or west, the Vindhyan region and the Himālayan region (Parvatasreyinah).

The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa has also a second classification, apart from this seven, into nine, adopted certainly from the astronomical and astrological work of Varāhamihira and Parasara. As mentioned earlier, India is described as resting on Viṣṇu in the form of a tortoise looking eastward; the various countries and peoples of Bhāratavarṣa are distributed accordingly over the different parts of his body, together with corresponding lunar constellations. The majority of the names of countries and peoples is very much the same as we find in the Nadyadi Varṇana section of the same Purāṇa, but there are also many names that are entirely new and original.

It has already been pointed out that, geographically speaking, the division of our country into seven regions is simple and is easily comprehended. We, therefore, propose to follow the account as given in the Nadyadi Varṇana section (Ch. 58) of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. The Brahmāṇḍa and the Vāyu Purāṇas, and as a matter of fact other Purāṇas also, give us nothing more than what is presented in these two sections of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.

The Madhyadeśa or central region (see the relief map of India) covered approximately the upper and middle Gangetic basin and the Yamunā-Cambal catchment area up to and including the Sone valley on the east, Sutlej on the north-west, Himālayas on the north, Āravallis on the west and the Satpura in the south. The Northern (or rather north-western) region comprised the whole of the Indus Basin including that of the river Kābul up to the Hindūkush. Its southern boundary may be taken as the River Sutlej. West of the Āravallis and south of the Sutlej up to and including the Baluchistān ranges on the west and the northern portion of the western coastal plain up to the Tāptī was the western region of the Purāṇics. The eastern region extended from the eastern limit of the central region up to the Assam hills from east to west and from the Himālayas to the eastern coastal plain, up to Mahendri. The rest of the peninsula south of the Satpuras was the southern region of Bhāratavarsa.

# CHAPTER X Bharatavarsa: Janapadas or Communities

THE Purāṇic lists of 'janapadas' (or territorial units) and people (or communities) are identical for the simple reason that each janapada is named after the community inhabiting it or vice versa. For instance, the Kuru janapada was the territory occupied by the Kurus, while Nāsikyas was the name given to the people occupying the Nasik region. Thus in all Purāṇic accounts the terms, 'people', and 'janapadas' are synonymous and interchangeable.

For the following discussion on the identification and location of the janapadas of Bhāratavarṣa[1] we shall follow the Purāṇic classification and sequence. The Purāṇas give the lists of janapadas or people in each major region mentioned in the previous chapter in a certain order which runs as follows:

1. The janapadas or the people of Madhya Deśa or Central Region
2. The janapadas or the people of Udicya or North-Western Region ✓
3. The janapadas or the people of Aparānta or South-Western Region
4. The janapadas or the people of Prācya or Eastern Region
5. The janapadas or the people of Dakṣiṇapatha or Southern Region
6. The janapadas or the people of Vindhyan Lands
7. The janapadas or the people of Mountain Regions.

## I. THE JANAPADAS OF MADHYADEŚA

The old name of the Upper Gangetic Basin, 'The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh' was not too ugly for use as a label, for it suggested some of the significant disunities typical of this area, though there is enough fundamental unity for it all to be included in a single region, even if we extend its eastern limits down to the Bihar valley—to include at least Patna and the confluences of the Sone and the Gaṇḍak; and its north-western limits to the valley of the Ghaggar which lies beween the Yamunā and the Sutlej.

This was the 'Middle Country' of the Epics, the Mahābhārata and the

Rāmāyaṇa, as well as of the Purāṇas. 'The Great Battle' was fought on its north-western margins, the land of Kṛṣṇa's early exploits was its western border, the home of Rāma was in Ayodhyā and the centre of Brāhmaṇism was at Vāraṇāsī. The Buddha and his creed were born here, and it was the appropriate centre of the empire of Aśoka, traces of his Pātaliputra still surviving in the subsoil of Patna. It was the Hindustān of the Muslim historians and Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, Jaunpur and Lucknow were medieval capitals. It has always been the heart of India, typically Indian and securely Indian. Central India was almost as safe a bulwark as the Himālayas; both the north-western highlands (beyond Panjāb) and the south-eastern ocean were remote, and the lands of approach from both were difficult and unattractive. Its security helped to make it, in a 'land of sanctuaries', the richest in shrines; its nodality helped to make it the home of Hindī, the nearest approach amongst the Indian languages—to a *lingua franca;* and it has much fundamental unity—in structure and relief, in climate and its vegetational controls, in the density and occupation of its people.[2]

It is to be remembered that the whole Upper Gangetic Basin, as defined above, was once mostly covered with woodlands and forests. The earliest Āryan settlements were on the rivers amidst cleared or open lands. It was from these nuclei that the territories of various tribes or communities who had settled there grew into compact units and led to the foundation of the respective janapadas and kingdoms. Naturally, within a uniform plain the boundary lines or frontier zones between the different territories were either the broad flood plains of the great rivers or the thick forests which remained uncleared for a long time. Some of these forests (Suayamjatavana) remained the normal feature of the land. For instance, the Kurujāṅgala was a wild region in the Kuru realm (discussed below), which extended as far as the Kamyaka forest. The kingdom of Uttara-Pañcāla was founded in this jungle tract. The Āñjanavana at Sāketa, the Mahāvana at Vaisāli and the Mahāvana at Kapilavāstu were natural forests, which extended up to the slopes of the Himālayas. The Parileyyakavana was an elephant-forest at some distance from Kauśāmbī on the way to Saravastī. The Lumbinivana on the Rohini, the Nāgavana of the Vajji kingdom, the Salavana of the Mallas at Kusīṇārā, the Bhesakalavana in the Bharga kingdom, the Simsapavana at Kauśāmbī, the forest to the north of Setavya in Kośala and the one near Alvi and the Pippalivana of the Moriyas may be cited as typical examples of natural forests which covered a substantial area of the Basin.

The Purāṇic janapadas of the 'Middle Country' can therefore be defined in terms of two natural features, the rivers and the forests. They are detailed below:

## *The Janapadas of the Gangetic Doabs*

*Kuru.* The land of the Kurus was originally the hinterland of Delhi west of the Yamunā where they first settled. Later they pushed their boundary towards the east across the Yamunā and the Doab to the Gaṅgā. The Purāṇic janapada of Kuru may be identified with the region bounded by the Ghaggar in the west, the Gaṅgā on the east and the forest belts in the north and south. Their two capitals, Indraprastha on the Yamunā and Hastināpur on the Gaṅgā are well known.

*Jāṅgala.* This janapada is usually associated with the Kurus and is sometimes called Kuru Jāṅgala. It may therefore be inferred that Kuru Jāṅgala was the wasteland of the Kurus and that it occupied the wooded north-eastern part of their territory, which extended up to the Kamyaka forest in the north.

*Pāñcāla.* The janapada of Pāñcāla may be considered as coterminous with Rohilkhaṇḍ of modern times, with the central portion of the Yamunā-Gaṅgā doab added to it. It extended from the Gaṅgā in the west to the Sarju on the east and occupied only the northern half of their doab and the middle portion of the Yamunā and Gaṅgā doabs. It had two divisions, the northern with its capital at Ahicchatra and the southern, with its capital at Kampila. They have been identified as Rāmnagar (in the Bareilly district) and Kāmpilya (in the Furrukhabad district) respectively. The dividing line between the Northern and Southern Pāñcāla was the river Gaṅgā. The southern boundary of the Pāñcāla territory again coincided with the forest belts already mentioned above.

*Kośala.* The Kośala janapada approximately coincided with the Sarju-Rapti doab. It also had two capital cities, Sravastī and Sāketa. According to the Epics and some Buddhist works, Ayodhyā seems to have been the earliest capital and Sāketa the later. In Buddha's time Ayodhyā became an unimportant town, but Sāketa and Sravastī were two of the six great cities of India. Sravastī has been identified with Sahet-Mahet which lies on the boundary of the Gonda and Bahraich districts, 19 miles from Balrampur. At times Kośala extended further south beyond the Sarju and included not only the Gomatī-Gaṅgā-Sarju triangle but also absorbed the janapada of Kāśī.

*Kāśī.* It was one of the ancient janapadas with its capital at Vārāṇasī and was counted among the sixteen Mahājanapadas of India. It extended to and included the southern portion of the Gaṅgā-Gomatī doab and also the Trans-Gaṅgā tract bounded in the north and south by forest belts.

### *The Janapadas South of the Yamunā-Gaṅgā Axis*

*Magadha.* Further east of the Kāśī-Kosala janapadas beyond the Son and south of the Gaṅgā was the janapada of Magadha. It was bounded by the Son on the west, the Gaṅgā on the north and the spurs of the Vindhyan plateau which touch the Gaṅgā near Monghyr on the east, and Vindhyan forests on the south. This janapada should normally be included in the eastern lands but since it lies on the borders of the 'Eastern' and 'Middle Countries' and also because the territory of Magadha annexed lands to the west of the Son, the Purāṇas thought it fit to include Magadha too in the 'Middle Country'.

*Kuntala.* This janapada has been located by Cunningham to the south of the Gaṅgā near Chunar. If this is correct the Kuntala janapada could correspond to the Mirazapur District of U.P. between the Gaṅgā and Son rivers. A major part of the Gaṅgā-Son doab was covered with forests and woodlands.

### *The Janapadas of the Trans-Yamunā Region (Western)*

Before we attempt the identification of those janapadas which were located in this region, i.e., approximately in the present east Rajasthan and which were included in the 'Middle Country' of the Purāṇas, it would be helpful to take note of its physical framework.

The dominating features of Rajasthan are the Aravallis and the desert of Thar. The main Aravalli range runs from Gujarat in the south-west to Delhi in the north-east. Its steep front to the desert plains of Thar is formed of discontinuous and sometimes echeloned ridges, the highest point, the great granitic mass of Mt. Abu (5,646 feet) lies off the main axis in the extreme south-west. Around Udaipur, the Aravallis reach their culmination in a great node of spurs and curving ridges; thence another series of low ridges strike off east-north-east. These ridges run parallel to and south of the Banas river, which cuts across them towards the south, near Tonk, to join the Chambal. They then run further towards the Gambhīra river to the Bharatpur region, from where they turn towards the north parallel to the Yamunā and pass through Deeg to Alwar. In Alwar, the eastern and the main western ridges meet to form a complex of low hilly country from where a spur of the same system meets the Yamunā at Delhi.

Another series of hills, low and sometimes detached, belonging to the Vindhyan system runs from Chitor to Fatehpur Sikri (in Agra district) north of the Chambal. The most pronounced ridge of this system is the

Bundi Range which effectively cuts off the Kotah basin from the northern regions.

Thus the whole of Rajasthan may be divided into the following physical divisions:

i. The Alwar-Jaipur region.

ii. The Bharatpur-Dholpur-Karauli region.

iii. The Bundi-Tonk region.

iv. The Mewar or Udaipur region.

v. The Trans-Aravalli region occupying the western slopes of the main Aravalli range.

vi. The Kotah-Jhalawar basin.

In Hiuen Tsang's time No. (i) above was called Vairāta; No. (ii) was part of Sūrasena, later called Braja; No. (iii) and (iv) were known as Vadari and No. (v) as Gūrjara. Nos. (i) to (v) are included by the Purāṇas in the Madhyadeśa and No. (vi) in the Vindhyan lands.

*Matsya.* The Matsya janapada was obviously the Vairāta region of Hiuen Tsang's time. It corresponded to physical division (i) above. It was bounded in the north by the broad tangled mass of the Aravalli hills which cover north Alwar and Gurgaon districts, in the east and west by the two ranges of the Aravalli system mentioned above and in the south approximately by the axis of the middle Banas. Its capital, Vairāta (or Bairāta) was located in the Alwar hills at a strategic point where the head-waters of the Sabi and Banganga nearly meet.

*Śūrasena.* This janapada coincided with region (ii) above. It was separated from Matsya by the eastern spurs of the Aravallis which run from Lalsot to Deeg in Bharatpur. Its southern boundary ran along the Vindhyan spurs parallel to the left bank of the Chambal. On the base of this funnel-shaped janapada was located their capital Mathurā on the Yamunā. The apex of this funnel pointed the route of Gujarat and western India which for long served as a marchland from the Yamunā basin to the western coast.

### *Śālva and Associated Janapadas : Bhuliṅga, Bhadrakāra and Bodha*

The Śālvas were an important people of ancient India. According to the Mahābhārata, the Śālva country was situated near Kurukṣetra. The Śālvas are nearly always mentioned with Matsyas in ancient literature. Commenting on Salvavayava, the Kasika on Panini's Aṣṭādhyāyī named Udumbara, Tilakhala, Madrakāra (the Bhadrakāra of the Purāṇas), Yugandhara, Bhulinga and Śaradaṇḍa as the six Avayavas or parts of Śālva janapada. The Vāyu and Matsya Purāṇas locate the Śālvas amongst the people of Madhyadeśa, but the Viṣṇu and Brahma place them in the west. The obvious conclusion is that the Śālva janapada was located somewhere on the boundary of the 'Middle' and 'Western' regions of India.

Again, the Śālvas and associated tribes are mentioned with those of the Panjāb, e.g. the Trigartas, the Kekayas, the Madras, etc. Thus the approximate location of the Śālva group of janapadas should be to the west of the Matsya country (which was an integral part of Madhyadeśa), somewhere near the Kuru land and in proximity of the Panjāb janapadas.

In addition to this there is another pointer to this group; one of its constituents, the Bhuliṅga has been mentioned by Ptolemy as Bholiṅgai which has been located on the western slopes of the Aravallis.

If we refer back to the physical division of Rajasthan mentioned earlier, we will observe that the Śālva group of janapadas pertained to region (v) above. The southernmost janapada, the Bhadrakāra corresponded with the Godwar region west of the Aravallis round about Bhadrajan while the Bhuliṅga corresponded with the upper basin of river Luni which was no doubt a precarious tract on the western slopes of the Aravallis coinciding with eastern Jodhpur.

The Śālva (proper) janapada occupied the Sheikhawati-Loharu-Bhiwani region and Bodha corresponded with the Hansi-Hissar-Sirsa tract bounded by the desert on the west, the Śālva on the south and the old bed of the Sutlej in the north. Thus in other words, the Bhuliṅga, Śālva, Bhadrakāra and Bodha janapadas occupied the borderland of the Middle Country so that some of the Purāṇas include them in Middle Country while others count them among the janapadas of the 'Western Lands'. It is to be noted that the precarious tract of Bhuliṅga has been omitted altogether by many Purāṇas.

Physical divisions (iii) and (iv) remain unrepresented in the above scheme of Purāṇic janapadas for the obvious reason that they have been included by the Purāṇas in the Vindhyan janapadas detailed below.

## II. THE NORTH-WESTERN JANAPADAS

A glance at the list of north-western janapadas given in the Purāṇas would at once show that they intend to enumerate the sub-regions of the entire basin of the Indus as well as the regions of the Makran Coast, which are ethnically, politically and geographically associated with that basin.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

The Indus basin extends from the land drained by the Sutlej in the east to the catchment area of the Kabul river on the west and from the northernmost arc of the Indus to the Arabian Sea Coast. It also includes the mountain rim on its west, down which quite a few streams and rivers flow into the Indus, though some of them lose themselves in the sandy tract which intervenes between the main river and the mountains.

A closer examination of the list reveals that the Purāṇic janapadas covered the following zones or sub-regions of the Indus region as defined above:

i. The western mountainous zone. This included the present Makran, Baluchistan and Waziristan.

ii. The northern and north-eastern mountain (or the Himālayan) zone drained by the affluents of the Kabul and the Indus rivers.

iii. The western bank of the Indus from its confluence with the Kabul river to the delta of the Indus.

iv. The eastern bank of the Indus from the Panjanād (where all the Punjab rivers meet) to the sea.

v. The Punjab plains.

vi. The delta.

Before we attempt to locate the Purāṇic janapadas in each of the sub-regions of the Indus basin, it would be useful to reiterate the relationship between topography and population incidence which plays an important part in the whole of the basin.

From the human point of view, the availability of water for drinking and irrigation is the primary factor in the location of settlements and human groups in regions of low rainfall. The basin of the Indus is one of the regions where rivers big and small control the concentration and distribution of population so forcefully that its population pattern is clearly reflected in its drainage pattern, in fact the two are practically identical. The drainage control is so emphatic that the size of a population group can be translated in terms of the magnitude of the river or stream which served it. From the functional point of view therefore we can divide the rivers into two classes:

(1) Small rivers or streams, such as we find in the desert belt or in the mountainous belt to the west of the Indus, are lines of assimilation which attract population all around them. The river valley is therefore invariably associated with a human group which gets settled there, acquires distinct traits and forms a 'tribe' or community which in its turn organises itself

into a janapada. These janapadas are obviously 'river janapadas', separated from each other by spurs of mountains or patches of desert sand.

(2) Major, wide and deep rivers with extensive flood plains separate human groups. Here population groups occupy their high banks, settle as near the river as practicable but avoid its floodplain altogether. The river serves as a boundary line between the groups on its both sides and each population group and subsequently each janapada is limited to and defined by the 'doab' of two such adjoining rivers.

This classification of rivers has a further significance. The tribes or communities living in isolated valleys of small streams or rivers in the northern or western mountain tracts, have always been able to retain their identity and individuality, but while tribes living on the banks of major rivers or in plains between them had better chances to expand, enlarge or consolidate their territories, they were vulnerable to forces from without which led to their expulsion or even extinction. Thus, historically the small cultural or territorial units in mountain valleys have been more 'stable' than the bigger units in the plains which may be termed 'mobile'. It is for this reason that we find discrepancies in the location of the latter in the accounts of the Mahābhārata, Kāvyamīmāṁsa, or even in various Purāṇas as well as in the Greek and the Arab literature. On the other hand, there is a considerable amount of unanimity among the various ancient and medieval works regarding the districts or janapadas occupied by the tribes of the hilly regions in the north and west. We can legitimately doubt if the area indicated in the Mahābhārata as that occupied by the Śūdras or Ābhīras is the same to which the Purāṇas refer or if it at all corresponds to the Sodrii or Abiria of Ptolemy, but we can safely assume that the land of the Daradas, Aurasas or Lampākas is the same as Dardrai, Arsa or Lambatai referred to in Greek works.

In the light of the above observations we shall analyse the list of north-western janapadas of the Purāṇas and arrange them on a regional basis, i.e., according to the sub-regions of the Indus Basin, indicated in the preceding paragraphs.

### *The Janapadas of the Western Mountainous Zone*

(a) *The Makran Region.* i. One of the regions of the Makran is the basin of the river Hingol, a winter torrent named Tomeros by the Greeks. Its principal town Hinglaz contained among others an important shrine of Śiva which used to draw large crowds of pligrims from India. The shrine appears to have been in existence even before the days of Alexander.[3]

In medieval times when Makran was under the Arabs, Hinglaz rose in importance and was one of the principal towns of those regions. The Purāṇas recognise it as a janapada under the name Añgaloka.

ii. A region adjoining the Hingol valley is that of the Parikan river. Herodotus calls the inhabitants of this region as the Parikanoi. Parikanoi is a Greek transcript of the Persian form of Parikan, the plural of the Sanskrit Parva-ka or in other words the Ba-rohi or men of the hills. The Purāṇas appear to designate this janapada by the name Pallava (Pahlava or Pahnava in some Purāṇas).

iii. The valley of the Dasht river, though an insignificant river now, may have supported a comunity or tribe in ancient times. This valley and the adjoining valley of the Bahu river, on whose mouth Gwador is situated, gained considerable importance under the Arabs who considered Makran as the threshold of India and whose main routes from Bampur (south-eastern Persia) to Debel (Indus Delta) traversed these valleys behind the coastal ranges. Ibn-i-Haukal, Istakhri and Idrisi mention the grandeur of their towns, Kiz, Rasak and Faharpara, etc. The Purāṇas name these valleys the janapadas of Deśamanka (the valley of the Dasht) and Bahu Bhadra (the valley of the Bahu).

iv. The next region in Makran towards the Indus Delta is that of the river Purabi known as Lasbela (the Arabii of the Greeks). The city of Armabel (or Armail or Karabel) is at present only an insignificant town, but picturesquely perched on the banks of the Purali river, it was an important centre during the Arab occupation and commanded for hundreds of years the coastal high-road to India. The whole of the valley is rich in ancient sites like Gondakahar (pre-Muslim) and Gondrani (Buddhist) and was part of a Buddhist kingdom which extended from Armabel to Gandava (near Kalat). The Purāṇic janapada named Hārabhūṣika or Hāramūrtika most probably corresponds to this valley.

The mouth of the river Hab and the Churma islands which lie near it formed at one time a stage on the coastal sea-route from the Persian Gulf to the Indus Delta, and were mostly inhabited by seamen or pirates. The Carmakhaṇḍa of the Purāṇas may be identified with this region.

(b) *Baluchistan and Waziristan.* i. *Kālatoyaka* of the Purāṇas is apparently the Kalāt region of Baluchistan. It practically coincides with the valley of the Malla river which almost touches the foot of the bounding ranges.

ii. *Vāhlika, Vālhika or Bāhlika.* Balis was a well-known region of Baluchistan, south of Quetta and the Bolan Pass, whose rivers, though not reaching the Indus, drain its basin. It has been described as 'a district in the desert. It is a place with much cultivation but with few amenities. It contains a few towns, such as S.f.njā'ī, Kūshk, Sīvī of which Kūshk is the residence of the Amīr.'[4] It was also known as Balistan. Vāhlika of the Purāṇas evidently corresponds to the region covered by the valleys of the Bolon, Nari and Gokh rivers. It almost coincided with what was formerly known as British Baluchistan, the land of the Balochis.

Vāhlika has been identified by many scholars with Bactria which is obviously wrong. Bactria belonged to the basin of the Oxus which lies north of the Hindūkush and which according to the Purāṇas, as discussed in earlier chapters, was in the Ketumāla region of the Jambūdwīpa and not in Bhāratavarṣa. It was far beyond the limits of the latter. Besides, whenever the Purāṇas intend to mention regions or people outside the territorial limits of Bharatavarṣa, they expressly mention this fact to avoid confusion.

iii. North of the Vāhlika region, we come to the valleys of the Zhob, the Kundar and the Gomal. The upper Gomal has always supported one of the most famous people of the region, the Waziris, who have retained their identity and independence even up to the present time. The Purāṇic Vāṭadhāna or Vāḍhadhāna can possibly be identified with this region.

iv. Further north we come across the important valleys of the Kurram and its affluent, the Tochi. The upper Kurram irrigates the Thal region, one of the most beautiful spots in north Waziristan which is probably identical with the Talagāna janapada of the Purāṇas. The Tochi river has given its name to the tribe which occupies its valleys, the Tochis. The Toshara janapada of the Purāṇas most probably meant the land of the Tochis. The identification of Toshara with the Tokharistan region of northern Afghanistan is apparently incongruous when considered in the context of the regional division of the Indus Basin.

v. North of the Talagāna and adjoining the Peshawar cul-de-sac is the land of a well-known tribe, the Afridis. It is certainly the same as the Aprytae of Synclax or the Aprita of the Purāṇas and the Mahābhārata.

## *The Janapadas of the Northern Mountain Zone of the Indus Basin*

(a) *The basin of the Kabul river.* Practically all the tributaries of the Kabul river which reach it from the northern mountains are associated with tribes or communities which are in most cases synonymous with the Purāṇic janapadas of the same name. Thus we have the following associations:

*Gāndhāra* — associated with the lower Kabul valley.

*Śatadruja* — associated with the valley of the Swat river or the land of Swatis or Assakenians of the Greeks.

*Dārva* — The valley of the Pañjkora, which meets the Swat river downstream, has been the home of another frontier tribe with its capital at Dir. It may be identified with the Dārva janapada of the Purāṇas.

*Kāmboja* — associated with the valley of the Kunar river. It is to be noted that the Purāṇas do not mention Kāmboja as a part of the Indus basin. They merely say, 'colonies of Kambojas'. This is true since their land Kāmadeśa or Kafiristan lies across the northern watershed of the Kunar river. However, they might have established colonies in the Kunar basin which have been noted by the Purāṇas.

*Lampāka* — associated with the upper Kabul valley. The region is the same as the Lambagae of the Greeks and Lamghan of today.

(b) *The Northern and North-Eastern Mountain* (*Himālayan*) *Zone.* The following intermontane valley region which are fairly well known have rightly been included by the Purāṇas in their list of the janapadas of the Indus Basin, since all of them lie on the affluents of the Indus which join it on its left or eastern bank.

i. Aurasa is the same as ancient Urusa or the modern Hazara district of the North-Western Frontier Province of Pakistan.

ii. Darada is still the land of an ancient tribe known as Daradas who live in the valley of river Kiṣengaṅgā in Kashmir. Shardi is its principal town.

iii. Kāśmīra or the Kashmir valley drained by the Jhelum.

### *The Western Bank of the Indus from the Kabul River* (*Attock*) *to the Delta of the Indus* (*from North to South*)

i. The lowland belt which runs parallel to the Indus along its western bank has always been an extremely dry and sandy tract. Ptolemy mentions only about a dozen towns of some importance from Amb (Embolina) to Karachi (Kolaka). There were, however, a few communities which occupied the valleys of western streams which could find their way into the Indus in spite of the intervening desert belt. One of such rivers is the Ḳurram whose valley was the territory of the Vāṭadhānas already mentioned. In the south of this there appears a town named Paradabathra in Ptolemy's list of stages on the route parallel to the west bank of the Indus. The name is indicative of a janapada mentioned in the Purāṇas as Pārada which from the Greek accounts appears to coincide with the Mithankot region of Dera Ghazi Khan district of the Punjab (Pakistan).

ii. South of the Pārada and west of the Indus was the Sindhu janapada which extended along the bank of the river as far south as Sahwan, an important stage on the north-south route.

### *The Janapadas of the Eastern Bank of the Indus from the Pañjanad to the Delta*

i. The Purāṇas mention two janapadas which, according to various references, appear to have occupied the eastern littoral of the Indus. One of them was the Śūdra (Xodraka of the Greeks, expressly mentioned by Ptolemy as a region on the left bank of the Indus). The Śūdrās, according to the Mahābhārata occupied the region where the Saraswatī disappeared in the desert. If we take the dry bed of the Hakra as that of the Saraswatī, which is probable, we can identify the Śūdra janapada with the Uch-Khanpur region of Bahawalpur.

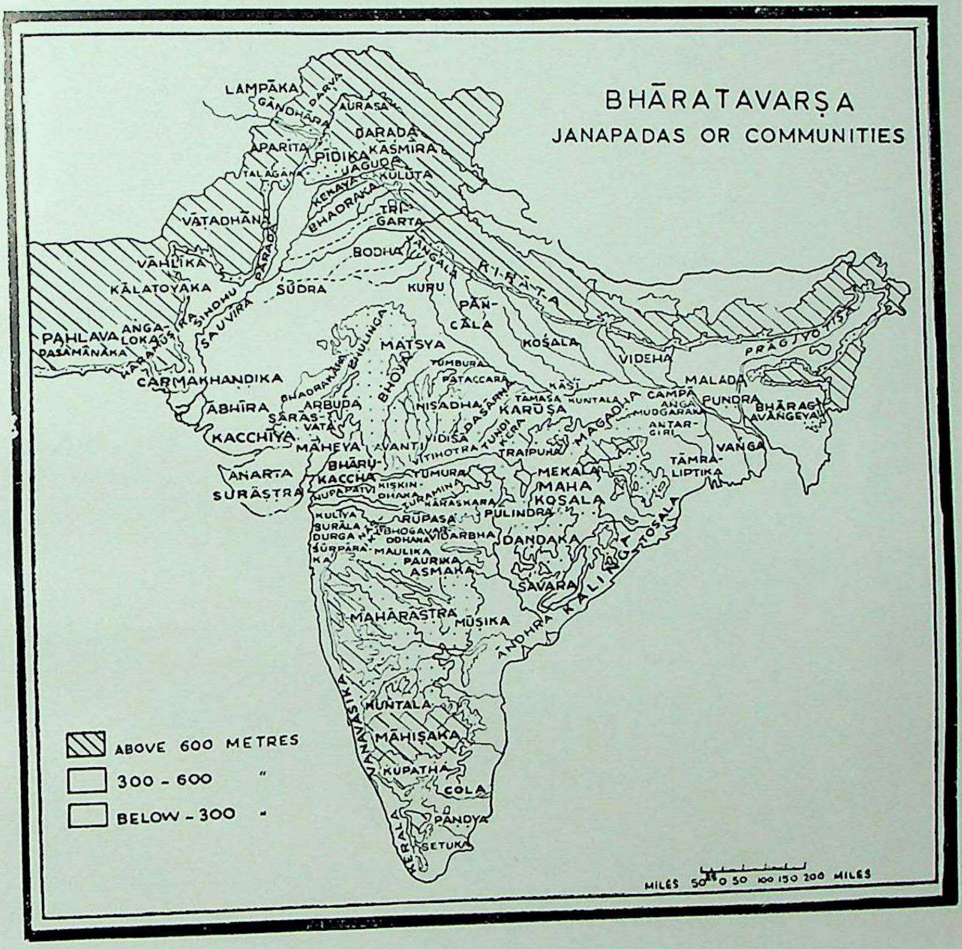
ii. Further downstream was the land of Sauvīras who from all accounts occupied a territory contiguous to that of the Sindhus but on the opposite bank of the river. Sauvīra, therefore, coincides with the Rohri-Khairpur region of Sind.

iii. To the south of Sauvīra, but again east of the Indus where it starts flowing in a number of deltaic streams, was the land of Abhiras. The janapada of Ābhīra (Aberia of the Periplus) therefore practically covered the western part of the Hyderabad district of Sind.

### *The Janapadas of the Punjab Plains*

The name Punjab or Pañjanad was applied originally only to the five great rivers east of the Salt range—in the days when the Beas did not join the Sutlej up to Bahawalpur. All of these rivers have always been of great importance, the distribution and movements of the people depended wholly and directly on them, and though their courses have been changing and still change within certain limits and their shoals shift, they carry a considerable amount of water and have always formed, with few exceptions, boundaries between the janapadas of ancient India and also the districts of today. But the boundaries have been largely related to the vagaries of

Fig. 15


BHĀRATAVARṢA
JANAPADAS OR COMMUNITIES
LAMPĀKA
DARVA
GĀNDHĀRA
AURASA
DARADA
APARITA
PĪDIKA
KASMIRA
JAGUDA
TALAGANA
KULŪTA
KEKAYA
BHADRAKA
TRI-GARTA
VĀTADHĀNA
PĀRADA
BODHA
JANGALA
KIRĀTA
VĀHLĪKA
KĀLATOYAKA
SINDHU
SAUVĪRA
SŪDRA
KURU
PAÑ-CĀLA
ANGA-LOKA
PAHLAVA
DASAMĀNAKA
HARAMŪRA
CARMAKHANDIKA
BHADRAKĀRA
PULINDA
MATSYA
BHOJA
TUMBURA
PATACCARA
KĀSĪ
KOSALA
VIDEHA
PRĀGJYOTIṢA
MALADA
ĀBHĪRA
ARBUDA
SĀRAS-VATA
NISADHA
DASĀRNA
TĀMASA
KARŪṢA
KUNTALA
MAGADHA
CAMPĀ
ANGA
MUDGARAKA
PUNDRA
BHĀRAGA
AVĀNGEYA
ANTAR-GIRI
KACCHĪYA
MĀHEYA
AVANTI
VIDISĀ
VĪTIHOTRA
TUNDI-KERA
TRAIPURA
VANGA
TĀMRA-LIPTIKA
ĀNARTA
SURĀṢTRA
BHĀRU-KACCHA
NUPAPATVI
TUMURA
KIṢKIN-DHAKA
TURAMINA
KĀRASKARA
MEKALA
MAHA KOSALA
PULINDRA
KULĪYA
SURĀLA
DURGA
ŚŪRPĀRA-KA
RŪPASA
BHOGAVAR-DDHANA
VIDARBHA
DANDAKA
MAULIKA
PAURIKA
ASMAKA
SAVARA
KALINGA
TOSALA
MAHĀRAṢTRA
MŪSIKA
ĀNDHRA
VANAVĀSIKA
KUNTALA
MĀHIṢAKA
KUPATHA
COLA
KERALA
PĀNDYA
SETUKA
▨ ABOVE 600 METRES
☐ 300 - 600 "
☐ BELOW - 300 "
MILES 50 0 50 100 150 200 MILES

the rivers which have been changing their courses all the time. For instance, in the extreme south of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb, the Indus changed its course over a canal dug from the Chenab to the Indus, and the Chenab had to make a new confluence with it about 60 miles further south. Multan once stood on an island in the 'Ravi,' and Tamerlane's men could work down the Ravi into the Chenab; but the Ravi joins the Chenab now *above* Multan—fully thirty miles above.

A characteristic of the doābs of the Punjab is the occurrence of 'high banks' between pairs of rivers. These not only provided excellent sites for towns and cities but also checked to some extent the shifting of the channels. Thus, the Jhelum and the Chenab could never swing west of the Jhelum bank (right bank) or east of the Chenab bank (left bank); and the same is true of the right bank of the old Beas and the left bank of the Sutlej. In fact, the high bank of the Jhelum runs the whole way along its western flank, isolating it wholly from the Indus.

Before the irrigation canals came into existence, the population distribution in the doābs was always concentrated in the northern belt of a doāb, i.e., the piedmont zone of the mountains. It is no wonder therefore that in general the capital cities of the ancient janapadas of the Punjab were located on strategic sites at the foot of the mountains.

The following is a brief analysis of the Purāṇic list of the janapadas ot the Punjab and their relation to the major rivers and their doābs.

i. Gāndhāra has already been mentioned along with the Trans-Indus janapadas. In fact, it extended across the upper Indus to the line of hills which radiate from Rawalpindi to the south-west, thus encircling the north-western corner of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb which faced towards the west rather than to the east.

ii. Another sub-region of the Sind-Sāgar Doāb is the basin of the river Sohan which is completely enclosed by the Salt Range on the east and the valley of the Indus on the west. The northern part of this basin, i.e. the Rawalpindi and Pindi Gheli region appears to coincide with the Sainika or Pīḍika janapada of the Purāṇas, while the southern basin, i.e. the Talagang-Minawali region was probably unpopulated on account of aridity.

iii. Adjacent to the above and to its east, was the janapada named Jāguḍa or Jāṅgala which coincided with the southern half of the Jhelum-Chenab Doāb. 'Jāṅgala' usually indicated an arid bushy country according to the Purāṇas.

iv. The northern portion of the Jhelum-Chenab Doāb comprised the famous janapada of Kaikeya whose capital Rajgarha or Girivraja has been identified with Jalalpur by Cunningham.

v. The Ravi-Chenab Doāb was the land of the Madrakas whose capital Sakela has been identified with Sanglawala Tibba by Cunningham.

## III. THE SOUTH-WESTERN JANAPADAS

The Matsya Purāṇa enumerates the following janapadas which are designated as the 'Western Janapadas':

(a) (i) Bhārukaccha which has been rightly identified as the Broach region. To be precise, this coastal janapada was located north of the estuary of the Narmadā and extended to the south of the Māhi.

(ii) Samahiya janapada is associated with the Māhi river and appears to have been contiguous to Bhārukaccha. The relief feature which demarcated the two janapadas in the dead-level coastal plain could only be the lower Māhi which forms a wide estuary at its mouth. It appears to have included the whole basin of the Sabarmatī situated north of the Māhi.

(iii) Saraswata janapada coincided with the region drained by the river Saraswatī which falls into the Rann of Cutch. It corresponds to the Patan-Mehsana plain between the foothills of the Aravallis and the Cutch.

(iv) The Saraswata adjoined the Arbuda janapada which was situated to its north-east and occupied the south-western spurs of the Aravallis which contained and enclosed the headwaters of the rivers Sabarmatī and Banas. It may have coincided with the Sirohi-Kotra-Palanpur triangle.

(v) Kachika janapada was no doubt the Cutch region.

(vi) The Kathiawar peninsula was divided into two janapadas, Ānarta and Saurāṣṭra, the former occupying the northern half and the latter the southern—both separated by the thickly forested mountain core of the peninsula.

(b) A few more janapadas have been included by other Purānas (except Matsya) in the western region of Bhāratavarṣa, but Matsya locates them in the south and includes them in its list of southern janapadas. The conclusion is that Matsya prefers Narmadā as the natural and cultural boundary between southern India and the rest of the country. Other Purāṇas carry this boundary further south to include the Tāpti valley and, as we will see presently, their boundary followed the crest of the hills (Sahyadri, Gawilgarh, Ajanta, Mahadeo and Maikal) which extend in a general east-west direction south of the Tāpti.

The janapadas which have been added by some Purāṇas on account of the shifting of the dividing line between north and south India are as follows:

(i) Surāla (Sirāla, Murala). This janapada in all probability coincided with the lower Tāpti basin centred round Surat and Navasari which command this region. This identification has a purely regional basis and needs confirmation from extra-geographical sources.

(ii) Tāpasa (Tāmasa, Svāpada) janapada was identical with the Khandeś region which played an important rôle in medieval history. It covered the whole of the middle Tāpti basin between the Sahyadri and Satpura hills and lay athwart the east-west route, along the Tāpti valley and the subsidiary southern route to upper Godāvarī. Its core appears to have been roughly the quadrilateral formed by the towns of Savda (near Bhusawal), Pacohra, south-west of Jalgaon, Songir and Tapal as shown on modern maps.

(iii) Further up the Tāpti valley there appears to have been another janapada, Turiamina which was drained by the upper Tāpti. This janapada is likely to have covered the whole valley of the Tāpti between Badnur and Burhanpur and approximately coincided with southern Nimār.

(iv) The valley of the river Purnā, a tributary of the Tāpti, which is separated from the former by the Gawilgarh Hills was divided into two territories. The middle and lower Purnā valley formed the Rūpasa janapada, and the upper Purnā valley, the Kāraskara. The latter occupied the southern foothills of the Gawilgarh hills near the existing Elichpur and Karasgaon towns in northern Amarāvatī.

(v) Nāsikya appears to be associated with the present town of Nasik and the janapada probably covered the whole of the Darna basin in which Nasik is situated. The Vāyu Purāṇa adds that, besides these janapadas, there are others also which are located on the banks of the Narmadā but their names are not mentioned. This statement shows that the above janapadas are exclusive of the Narmadā janapadas, which is correct since none of the janapadas mentioned above happens to lie in or about the Narmada valley.

(c) The following janapadas have been added to the list of western janapadas by some Purāṇas (Mārkaṇḍeya, Vāyu and Brahmāṇḍa) but have been omitted altogether by the Matsya. This shows that these janapadas were added when more details regarding the western coast of India became available.

(i) Sūrparaka (or Sūryāraka) is evidently the western coastal plain drained by the river Sūrya which runs parallel to the coast from north to south and enters the sea near Bassein. It approximately coincides with the Thana district of Maharashtra. In fact both the names of this janapada as given by different Purāṇas are correct. The sites of Safale, Nala Sopara and Sopara which occur within this region are marked on modern maps.

(ii) Kālavana (Kolavana) appears to be associated with the town of Kalvan which stands on the Girna river, a southern tributary of the Tāpti. The Kālavana Janapada, if so identified, covered the Girna valley up to the point where it descended from the plateau into the plain of the Tāpti (Khāndeś), i.e., up to Chalisgaon. It was separated from the Nāsikya janapada by the Chandor range and the Surāla janapada by the crest of the Western Ghats.

(iii) There are only two regions in the western coastal plain which remain unaccounted for in the above scheme of identifications. One is the coastal plain between the mouths of the Tāpti and Narmadā rivers and the other between the Surāla and Sūryāraka janapadas. The former may be the Kulīya janapada drained by the Kim river and the latter the Durgā. If this assumption is correct one is tempted to identify the modern Daman-Gaṅgā with the Durgā river of the Purāṇas.

## IV. THE EASTERN JANAPADAS

The 'Prācya' or 'Eastern Country' of the Purāṇas may be broadly defined as the basins of the lower Gaṅgā and Brahmaputrā rivers. The western boundary of this major region may be taken roughly as the course of the river Gaṇḍak from the Himālayan foothills to its confluence with the Gaṅgā; then along the river Son from its mouth, which was formerly near Patnā, to the latitude of Rohtas. Thereafter it followed the crest of the Hazaribagh plateau across Bihar and then continued along the south-western boundary of the present State of West Bengal to the sea.

The entire 'Eastern Country' barring the hilly fringe is essentially a level plain on which innumerable streams wander along ill-defined courses in all directions. There has been a progressive eastward shift of the Gaṅgā water from a main outlet, Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly along the western margins of this alluvial plain to the present main course, the Padmā-Meghnā, with such streams as the Ichamati, Jalangi, Matabhanga, Gorai representing intermediate (not necessarily successive) positions of the most important channel. Thus there is a contrast between the decayed western deltaic alluvium scarred with silted or stagnant *bhils*, the 'remains' of dead rivers and the active eastern deltaic alluvium where the mass of water and silt brought by the rivers is still building the delta. Old traditions and Ptolemy's observations show that the Bhāgirathī was the main outlet of the Gaṅgā even as late as the early centuries of the Christian era.

The 'Eastern Country' as defined above may be conveniently divided into the following natural regions:

(a) The Middle Gangetic Valley. This may be further subdivided into two regions:

(i) The region north of the Ganges between the Rapti and the Kośī;

(ii) The region south of the Gaṅgā, between the Son (in the west and the spurs of the Rājmahāl hills, which touch the Gaṅgā near Rājmahāl town and round which the Gaṅgā turns abruptly towards the south (in the east), the Gaṅgā in the north and the Rājmahāl hills in the south.

(b) The Kośī-Gaṅgā and Brahmaputrā-Yamunā Doāb watered by the streams flowing down the Himālayas. The usual flat surface of this region is broken near its centre by a stretch of low hills called the Barind, covered with brushwood jungle—the remain of a former forest.

(c) The Middle Brahmaputrā valley (now forming part of northern Assam).

(d) The Gangetic Delta proper between Bhāgirathī-Hooghli, Gaṅgā-Padmā and the sea.

(e) The Western Margin consisting of:

(i) The piedmont plain between the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly axis and the Peninsular block on the west;

(ii) The Contai Coastal Plain.

(f) The Eastern Margin, i.e., the plain east of the Yamunā-Padmā consisting of:

(i) The Yamunā-Meghnā Doāb;

(ii) Plains east of the Meghnā.

(g) The hilly region between the Rajmahāl and Hazaribagh ranges.

The Purāṇic janapadas of the Eastern Country very nearly coincided with the regions mentioned above. This is natural since in the early history of the settlement of this area, population distribution was mainly controlled by natural features such as large rivers, thick forests, inhospitable swamps and hills. Centres of population, which formed the nuclei of the later janapadas were bound to occur at suitable spots in the lowlands where there was the least danger of floods, but where the natural features provided facilities for defence and communication.

In the light of the above observations we shall attempt to determine the location and extent of the different Purāṇic janapadas with reference to the natural regions mentioned above.

### (a) *The Janapadas of the Middle Gangetic Valley*

i. *North of the Gaṅgā—Malla, Videha*

ii. *South of the Gaṅgā—Magadha, Aṅga*

Region (a) (i) north of the Gaṅgā mentioned above, i.e. the Middle Gangetic plain between the Himālayan Terai and the Gaṅgā, the Raptī and the Kośī was occupied by two janapadas. The Malla janapada coincided with the Doāb of the Gaṇḍak and the Raptī-Gaṅgā, while the Videha janapada extended to its east from the Banḍak to the Kośī. The capital cities of the Malla janapada were Pawa and Kuśinagar which have been identified by Cunningham with Padrona and Kasia about 35 and 37 miles east of Gorakhpur respectively. The capital city of the Videha janapada was Mithila about 35 miles north-west of Vaiśāli (modern Basarh in the Muzaffarpur district in Bihar).

Region (a) (ii) south of the Gaṅgā contained two janapadas. The janapada between the Son (on the west) and the spurs of the Peninsular Block which press against the Gaṅgā at Mukamah (on the east), the Hazirabagh crest (in the south) and the Gaṅgā (in the north) was known as Magadha. The other, to the east of Mokamah spur and west of the Mandargiri Hills and bounded by the Gaṅgā in the north and the Rajmahāl Hills in the south was the Aṅga janapada. The capital of the former was Rajgarha (or Rajgir) situated on a terrace of Barabar Hills while that of Aṅga was Campā (near Monghyr) located within a bend of the Gaṅgā which virtually surrounded the city on three sides.

### (b) *The Kosi-Gaṅgā and Brahmaputrā-Yamunā Doāb*

This triangular region bounded by the Kośī and the Gaṅgā in the west, the Brahmaputrā-Yamunā in the east and the Duars on the north is a vast plain diminishing in height from about 300 ft. to 100 ft. above sea-level, scarred by innumerable old river-courses and subject to disastrous floods, especially along the Tistā, which like the Kośī is an exceptionally violent stream. In the heart of this doāb lies the Barind, a large island or terrace of older alluvium. The Barind was formerly covered with thick forest which formed a tongue of the Himālayan forest belt protruding far towards the south. Barind was therefore a huge block of negative tract in the centre of the Doāb surrounded by population groups or janapadas between the forest and the bounding rivers.

*Puṇḍra.* Puṇḍras are associated with the Aṅgas, Vaṅgas, Kaliṅgas and Magadhas, Suhmas, etc., in ancient literature, e.g. the Mahābhārata, Harivaṁsa and the Purāṇas. Rājaśekhara (*Kāvyamīmāṁsa*) places the Puṇḍra country in the east along with Prāgjyotiṣa and Tamrilipta. On the authority of Hiuen Tsang's description of Puṇḍravardhana, Cunningham identified its capital with Mahasthan,[5] 7 miles north of the modern town of Bogra. The Puṇḍra country may therefore be identified with that portion of the Gaṅgā-Brahmaputrā Doāb which was bounded by the two Yamunās on the east and west, the Gaṅgā in the south and the ancient Barind forest in the north.

*Malada.* This janapada corresponded to the tract which extended between the Barind forest and the Gaṅgā and included the present Malda district of Bengal as well as the districts of Rajshahi and west Dinajpur of East Pakistan.

### (c) *The Middle Brahmaputrā Valley*

This corresponds to the Pragjyotiṣa janapada of the Purāṇas. This was a famous janapada on the fringe of the 'Eastern Country'. According to *Raghuvaṁśa* this janapada lay evidently north of the Brahmaputrā river and therefore probably included the whole belt of alluvial land north of the Brahmaputrā from the Tistā eastwards.

### (d) *The Delta Proper*

The delta proper or the deltaic triangle lies between the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly (the main outlet of the Gaṅgā in ancient times) and the Padmā. This appears to be coterminous with the Vaṅga country of the Purāṇas. This identification is not only based on regional relationships but is also supported by Ptolemy's account of Gangariddee country and Kālidasa's *Raghuvaṁśa* in which he describes Raghu's exploits in these lands.

### (e) *The Western Margin*

The Western Margin, i.e. the territory between the Gaṅgā-Bhāgīrathi-Hooghly axis and the eastern margin of the Bihar plateau.

This region was divided into two janapadas with Suhma and the Tāmraliptika. The latter was limited to Midnapur including the Contai

Plain District or the Haldi river basin and extended to the sea. North of it there was the Suhma country, mainly covering the districts of Hooghli, Burdwan, Eastern Birbhum and Western Murshidabad. The whole of the Western Margin as defined above comprised the Radha country of later times, which included the Suhma and Brahmottara janapadas of the Purāṇas. In fact the Matsya uses the name Suhma janapada only in place of Brahmottara, mentioned by Mārkaṇḍeya, Brahma and Vāyu. Other Purāṇas mix the two together and call it the Suhmottara janapada.

### (f) *The Eastern Margin*

(i) The Yamunā-Meghnā Doāb appears to have formed the Bhārgava-Aṅgaya janapada of the Purāṇas. It adjoined the Vaṅga janapada on the west but was separated from it by the Yamunā-Padmā.

(ii) Regions east of the Meghnā are not represented in the Purāṇic scheme of janapadas. This confirms the view that the eastern limit of the country was the Meghnā river.

### (g) *The Hilly Regions*

Three janapadas appear to have been recognised by the Purāṇas in the hilly plateau region of Southern Bihar.

Mudgarka may have been a janapada coinciding with the north-eastern spurs of the Rajmahāl Hills, i.e., approximately the eastern Santal Parganas, southern Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts of Bihar. It appears to be associated with the Mudgagiri hills of Monghyr. Antargiri and Bahirgiri janapadas appear to have been located on the plateau proper. The former occupied the hilly country between the Rajmahāl and Hazaribagh ranges and the latter the region beyond the Hazaribagh range, i.e. the basin of the Damodar. Both the janapadas essentially belonged to the Hills.

## V. THE SOUTHERN JANAPADAS

The list of the Purāṇic janapadas of the South shows that the Dakṣinapatha or Southern India was normally conceived as that part of the Indian Peninsula which lies south of the crests of Satpura-Mahadeo-Maikal Ranges and the western and southern limits of the Mahānadī Basin. North of this line were the Vindhyan lands while to its north-west lay the western lands of the Purāṇas. By virtue of their position, the janapadas located on the border lands of these major regions could be assigned to either side. Some Purāṇas, for instance, the Matsya and the Vāyu, rightly consider the Narmadā and Mahānadī axis as the dividing line between Northern and Southern India and include the Tapti basin within the southern region.

Some included the basin in the western, others in the Vidhyan region. But these assignments do not in general affect the location of the various janapadas with reference to the natural features of the country.

Southern India, defined as above, can be divided into the following well-defined regions:

(a) The Western Coastāl Plain, between the crest of the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea;

(b) The Deccan Plateau;

(c) The Eastern Coastal Plain, between the Deccan Plateau and associated hills and the Bay of Bengal.

### (a) *Janapadas of the Western Coastal Plain—the Western Littoral*

*Kerala and Setuka.* South of Kanara the structure and climate of the coastal plain between the scarp of the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea give it a distinctive personality. The region is known as Malabar—a land of great heat, high humidity, lagoons, sand dunes and greater width of the lowland. It had for centuries the world monopoly of pepper and cardamom. The Malabar coast down to the southernmost tip of the peninsula had always remained an independent territory isolated from the rest of India by virtue of its position between the Ghats and the sea. An Aśoka edict mentions two independent kingdoms of the southern peninsula, viz. that of Keralaputra or the Malabar Coast, and that of Satiyaputra, probably equivalent to the Satyamangalam province of the later kingdom of Madura. Kerala of the Purāṇas, therefore, corresponds to the present Kerala State while Setuka corresponds to its eastern hinterland near the cardamom hills.

*Vanavāsaka.* A clan or family called Kadamba enjoyed independent power in the districts now called north and south Kanara and in western Mysore from the third to the sixth century. Their capital Banawāsi, also known as Jayanti or Vaijayanti, was so ancient that it is mentioned in the edicts of Aśoka and in the inscriptions of the Sātavāhana. The Purāṇic janapada Vanavāsaka most probably corresponds to this region. Ptolemy refers to it as Banaouasei located on the western coast.

### (b) *Janapadas of the Deccan Plateau or the Peninsular Interior*

*Māhiṣaka, Kuntala and Kupatha (Kumāra)* janapadas belonged to the region commonly known as Karnāṭaka, i.e. the real Karnāṭak or the modern Mysore and not the Madras littoral. This region extends from the Deccan

Lavas on the north to the Moyar in the south; the western limit is, of course, the crest of the Ghats and to the south-east the border hills and scarps of the Mysore plateaus provide a fairly sharp boundary between the Moyar and the Pālār. But in the north-east, the high plateaus break down into isolated basins south of the Pennar and the Cuddapah ranges. In the north the Raichur Doāb, between the Kṛṣṇa and Tungabhadrā, was the marchland between the Deccani Sultanates and Vijayanagar, which city occupied a forward position on the Tungabhadrā, near Hampi village. This doāb is still a marchland between Karnātaka, Telengāna and to a lesser extent, Mahārāṣṭra.

Kuntala janapada mainly occupied the territory drained by the upper Tungabhadrā and its tributaries, the Hagari and the Hindri and coincided with the Dharwar, Bellary districts of the modern State of Mysore, and parts of Anantapur and Raichur districts of the modern State of Andhra Pradesh. Its core was the region round Hampi or Vijayanagar.

*Mahārāṣṭra.* Although modern Mahārāṣṭra, the Marhātha country *par excellence,* is usually taken as coterminous with the main mass of the Deccan lavas above the Ghats from the Tāpti to the Malaprabha, the Purāṇic janapada called the Mahārāṣṭra appears to indicate only that region which is covered by the basin of the river Bhima, since the other regions included in the present Mahārāṣṭra are mentioned as separate janapadas or territories.

*Māhiṣaka.* This janapada covered the southern region of Karnāṭaka. It occupied the basin of the upper Kāverī and Shimsha river. The Kupatha janapada occupied a position at the foot of the plateau near the south-eastern corner of Karnāṭaka, west of the Chola and Pāṇḍya janapadas. It corresponded to the modern Coimbatore and part of Salem district.

*Asmaka and Maulika, Paurika (Paunika), Vidarbha.* The basin of the river Godāvarī forms an important unit in the historical geography of Southern India. The river drains a large area mainly composed of Deccan lavas and flows through a wide fertile valley towards the east. Its catchment area is bounded in the north by the Sahyadri Parvata or Ajanta range, the Nirmal and Satmala ranges and the hills of Bastar and Orissa known to the Purāṇics as the Mahendra Parvata. Through the gaps between these hills the affluents of the Godāvarī, the most important of which is the Waingaṅgā, collect the drainage of the regions beyond these hills, virtually up to the Satpura, Mahadeo and Maikal hills. The ranges to the south of the basin are less pronounced except the Balaghat range which separates it from the valley of the river Bhima.

The upper Godāvarī basin above its confluence with the Mañjra is an open land on the Deccan plateau dotted with hills of moderate height. Its volume is also limited but the river is deeply entrenched in lava beds so that its banks are high and steep on both sides. The river in this part of its course has served as a zone of assimilation in which were located the capital cities of kingdoms occupying territories on both of its banks. Below Nander it receives its major tributaries from the north and gains considerable volume, developing an extensive flood-plain as it rolls down the plateau. By the time it crosses the spurs of the Nirmal and Satmala ranges and is joined by the Prānhitā it becomes a voluminous river, meandering through a wild terrain covered by thick forests which stretch right across the peninsula from the Sahyadri hills to Bastar and Mahendragiri.

The Purāṇas mention many janapadas of the Godāvarī basin, each janapada being associated either with parts of the Godāvarī basin or the basins of its tributaries. For instance:

*Maulika* janapada was coterminous with the upper Godāvarī valley with its capital at Paithan which lies on the northern bank of the Godāvarī. It probably covered parts of the Aurangabad, Ahmadnagar, Bhir and Prabhani districts which lie within the basin of the Godāvarī proper.

*Paurika* or *Paunika* janapada was, it appears, a small territory occupying the valley of the river Pūrana, a tributary of the Godāvarī which joins it near Nander.

Further down the Godāvarī where it joins the Mañjra river, the well-known janapada of Asmaka was located with its capital at Bodhan.[6]

The Vidarbha janapada was also a part of the Godāvarī basin. It corresponded to the basin of rivers Wardhā and Pengangā which together join the Godāvarī through river Prānhitā near Chinnur. In fact the river Pengaṅgā formed the southern boundary of this janapada.

Bhogavarddhana appears to correspond to the valley of the upper Purnā river below the Sahyadri parvat. The pointer appears to be the town of Bhokardon, about 20 miles south of Ajanta.

### (c) *Janapadas of the Eastern Coastal Plain or Eastern Littoral*

*Pāṇḍya.* The Pāṇḍya kingdom, as defined by tradition, extended from the southern Vallaru river (Pudukottai) on the north to Cape Comorin and from the Coromandal (Cholamandala) coast on the east to the 'great highway', the Achchankovil Pass leading into southern Kerala or Travancore. It comprised the existing districts of Madurai and Tirunelveli with parts of the old Travancore State. The janapada of Pāṇḍya was thus centred around the basin of river Vaigai on which the city of Madurai is situated.

*Cola.* The Cola country extended along the Coromandal coastal plain from Tirupathi to Puddukottai, where it abutted on the Pāṇḍya territory. Its core was the middle Kāverī basin with Karūr and Tiruchirapalli as its main centres.

Āndhra covered the extensive deltaic plains of the Kṛṣṇā and Godāvarī rivers, although at times it extended up their valleys to the foot of the plateau. The Āndhras were a famous and well-known people who founded a kingdom in the third century A.D.

The Kaliṅga janapada occupied the narrower eastern coastal plain from the delta of the Godāvarī to that of the Mahānadī. It was probably one of the best-known regions of the south in ancient Indian literature. The Jatakas refer to the capital city of Kaliṅga which was Dantaparanagara which is probably identical with Dantapura mentioned in the Mahābhārata and with Dantapura of inscriptions. Other cities of the Kaliṅga country are also known, e.g. Rajapura, Simhapura (or Singupuram near Chicacole), Kancanapura and Kaliṅganagara which has been identified with Mukhalingam on the river Vamsadharā.

*Śavara, Pulinda, Mūsika, Daṇḍaka.* The littoral between the Cola janapada in the south, the Āndhra in the north and the plateau on the west, the basins of the lower Godāvarī, the lower Kṛṣṇā (excluding their deltas and the Pennar) formed a vast region almost entirely covered by forests. Within this forest which extended towards the west along the latitudinal hills of the plateau, the river valleys not only coincided with possible lines of communication but also supported isolated tribes or groups of population. The term 'janapada' could be loosely applied to the territories occupied by these groups, some of which were recognised as such even in more ancient literature. For instance, we find in Aitareya Brāhmana (VII. 18) that the elder sons of Viśvāmitra were under a curse to become the progenitors of servile races, such as the Āndhras, the Pundras, the Śavaras, the Pulindas and the Mutipas, meaning thereby that they were non-Āryan tribes. The Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas locate them in the south. The probable location of this group of janapadas may be indicated with the help of the natural features of this region.

Śavara may be associated with the valley of the river Sabari, a left-bank tributary of the Godāvarī. Its position very much concides with that of Sabarai mentioned by Ptolemy. It may be the same as the Suari of Pliny. If this is correct, then the Pulinda janapada should be identical with the region between the Prānhitā and Bandia rivers, the two left-bank tributaries of the Godāvarī which join it from the north. This location is based on the following association of tribes found in many works:

Pulindas, Āndhras, Guhas, Śavaras, Cucukas, Madrakas (Mahābhārata, XII, 207, 42);

Pulindas, Vidarbhas, Dandakas, Vindhyas, etc. (Matsya and Vāyu);

Pulindas, Kaliṅgas, Ābhīras, Āndhras, Vidarbhas, Kuntalas (Mārkaṇḍeya).

Mūṣika probably belonged to the upper valley of the river Musi, a tributary of the Ksṛṇā while Nala Kālika (or Nala Ālūpa or Kalupa) occupied the basin of the lower Musi, i.e., the present Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh State.

*Daṇḍaka*. The Daṇḍaka forest extended right across the peninsula from the hills of Orissa to the source of the Godāvarī but the Purāṇic janapada of Daṇḍaka probably referred to the valley of the Indrāvatī, a left-bank tributary of the Godāvarī.

## (d) *Janapadas of the Vindhyan Region*

(The 'Vindhyan region' as conceived by the Purāṇas in this context—covered a vast area. It included almost all the plateaus and hills between the Yamunā and the Chambal in the north, the Tāpti-Mahānadī axis in the south, the western seaboard (within the present Gujarat State) on the west, and the Chhota Nagpur and Orissa hills on the east.) This vast region whose chief characteristics are its rugged terrain, mostly covered with thick forests, narrow and entrenched river valleys, sparse population and paucity of through routes, can be further divided into three well-defined sub-regions:

i. The long-slope of the Vindhyas towards:
    (a) north, comprising the basin of the Chambal;
    (b) north-east, comprising the upper basins of the Sonar, Betwa, Dhasan, Ken and Tons;
    (c) the spurs of the Vindhyas and intervening plateaus separating (a) and (b) above;
    (d) south-east, comprising the basin of the Brāhminī and the Mahānadī.

ii. The western and southern scraps of the Vindhyan hills.

iii. The basin of the upper and middle Narmadā river.

The above sub-regions may be translated in terms of Purāṇic janapadas as follows;

i. (a) Avanti, Bhoja;
   (b) Vidiśa, Mālava, Daśārṇa, Karūṣa;
   (c) Niṣadha, Tumbura;
   (d) Utkala, Tosala, Kosala and Mekala.

ii Uttamārṇa.

iii. Vītihotra, Anūpa, Tuṇḍikera, Tripura, Tumura, Patvi, Kiṣkindhaka.

We learn from the Purāṇas that the Haihayas comprised five families: Bhojas, Vītihotras, Saryatas, Avantis and Tuṇḍikeras.[7] It is also stated that the Satvats and the Bhojas were branches of the Yadu family who dwelt on the banks of Yamunā[8] and that both of them were allied tribes. The Mahābhārata makes numerous references to Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas who are always mentioned together.[9] We also find in the Mahābhārata[10] that the Bhojas, Andhakas, Vṛṣṇis, Kukuras, Sṛñjayas and Chedis formed some kind of a confederacy. The Adiparvan tells us that Arjuna was welcomed and honoured by the Bhojas, Vṛṣṇis, and Andhakas on his way to Dwāraka. Similarly, it is stated in the Udyogaparva that a large crowd of Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Bhojas followed Kṛṣṇa to Dwāraka.

The above statements suggest that the region occupied by these tribes was (1) somewhere south of the Yamunā (2) to its south-west between Mathurā and Dwāraka (3) along one of the established routes towards Gujarat and (4) to which there was easy access for movement or migration from the western bank of the Yamunā. This brings us to the obvious conclusion that all these tribes occupied the basin of the Chambal, the stronger occupying the fertile river valleys and the weaker being pushed to the piedmont margins of the basin bounded by the eastern spurs of the Aravallis on the west, western Vindhyas on the south and the northern spurs of the Vindhyas which culminate in the hills of Narwar and Gwalior in the east. The latter form the watershed between the valley of the Sind on the west and that of the Betwa on the east.

On the basis of the above observations, we can fix the approximate location of the various janapadas of the Chambal Basin mentioned by the Purāṇas.

### (i) (a) *The Janapada on the Long Slope of the Vindhyas Towards the North*

(1) *Avanti.* With its capital at Ujjaini, this was a well-known region, which covered the headwaters of the river Chambal and the area drained by the Sipra and the Kali Sindh and the upper Chambal. Owing to its

position Avanti became a great commercial centre. Three routes met here; from Bhārukaccha (Broach) and Sūrpāraka (Sofala) from Vidarbha and Nasik and from Saraswatī in Kosala (Oudh). It was called Avanti at least as late as the second century A.D. but from the seventh-eighth century onwards it was called Mālwa.

(2) *Bhoja.* The Chambal basin as a whole, as visualised above, can be sub-divided into two distinct natural sub-regions, one drained by the Chambal and its southern tributaries and the other drained by a major and important northern tributary, the Banas (the Parnasa of the Purāṇas). These two sub-regions of the Chambal basin are separated by a series of ridges of the Aravallis, running along an axis coinciding with a line joining Mandalagarh, Bijolia and Nimach. The natural centre of this region is Bhilwara, about 80 miles north-east of Udaipur. This region appears to be the Bhoja janapada of the Purāṇas, since it satisfies all the conditions of space-relationship as regards routes, proximity to Avanti, association with the Yamunā and the Chambal and its sheltered position, so essential to the establishment of an independent political unit.

### (i) (b) *The Janapadas on the Long Slope of the Vindhyas Towards North-East*

Many of the janapadas of this group can be easily located.

Vidiśa obviously corresponded to the basin of the upper Betwa (or Vetravatī). Daśārṇa extended over the adjacent Sagar plateau dissected by the deeply entrenched valleys of the river Dhasan and its headwaters. In fact, there is no distinct, natural barrier between these two regions, and the two janapadas often merged into each other.

References in the epics and Purāṇas suggest that the Karūṣas lived in a region included in, or contiguous to, the land of the Cedis. These references may be summed up as follows:

(1) They are associated with the Matsyas, the Kasis, the Cedis and the Pancālas (Bhīṣmaparva, 47, 54, 56).

(2) The Matsyas, the Cedis and the Bhojas are grouped together by the Viṣṇupurāṇa (Wilson, 156-190).

(3) In the Vāyu, the Matsya and the Mārkaṇḍeya, the Karūṣas are said to have occupied the Vindhyan lands.

(4) The Rāmāyaṇa (Bāla Khaṇḍa, 27) appears to indicate the Son-Gaṅgā doāb as the land of the Karūṣas.

(5) According to tradition the Son-Ken doāb was called the Karusadeśa.

Taking all the above indications into account, as well as the topography of the north-eastern slopes of the Vindhyas, we come to the conclusion that the Karūṣa janapada of the Purāṇas coincided with the northern slope of the Kaimur range and included within it the basin of the upper Tons river. Its southern boundary was therefore the Kaimur range, the western limit was the Ken and the eastern and northern boundary was demarcated by the scarps of the Vindhyas which face the Yamunā.

It is to be noted that the Karūṣa janapada is also included by many Purāṇas in the list of the janapadas of the Madhya Deśa.

There is one important region on the north-eastern long slopes of the Vindhyas which has been left out in the above scheme. This region covers the basin of the middle and upper Ken (or Karamnasa). It appears to coincide with what the Purāṇas name as Mālava, i.e. the basin of the Ken bounded by the lava scrap overlooking the Narmadā in the south and the northern Vindhyan scarps, i.e. Ajaigarh-Panna hills in the north. This is the only portion of the Malwa plateau (which is defined as the part of the Deccan trap lying north of the Narmadā) which is not otherwise covered by the Purāṇic janapadas of this region.

### (i) (c) *The Intervening Spurs of the Vindhyas Between (i) (a) and (i) (b) above*

At least two of the Vindhyan janapadas appear to have covered these spurs and the valleys included within them.

Tradition associates the Niṣadhas with King Nala whose story is narrated in the Mahābhārata. In its turn, King Nala is associated with the region of Narwar, a district of the old Gwalior State, which is full of ancient archaeological sites. The Narwar region may therefore possibly be identified with the Niṣadha janapada of the Purāṇas.

Tumbura may be identified with the region north of Narwar stretching from the foothills of the Vindhyas to the Chambal. This region became later the land of the Tonwar Rajputs.

### (i) (d) *Eastern and South-Eastern Slopes of the Vindhyas*

The three janapadas which fall under this group are:

Utkala which coincided which the present Balasore district of Orissa.

Tosala covered the whole of the Mahānadī delta. Tosali (modern Dhauli) near Bubhaneswar occurs in the centre of this region.

Kosala may be identified with the northern margin of the modern Mahākośal region.

Mekala covered the southern slopes of the Maikal range, south of Amarkaṇṭaka, i.e. the present Bilaspur district of Madhya Pradesh.

(iii) *Within the Narmadā Basin*

(1) Tripura is a well-known region round Tewar (about 10 miles west of Jabalpur). This janapada covered the upper Narmadā valley which coincided with the present Jabalpur and parts of the Mandla and Narsimhapur districts.

(2) *Tuṇḍikera.* We find two towns of the same name north of the Narmadā. The one which is north-east of Narsimhapur lies beyond the Bhander range on its forested slopes. The other which lies within the Narmadā basin is a better choice since the region about it is fairly wide and suitable for the location of a janapada. Since the Narmadā is not very wide here, the janapada of Tuṇḍikera probably extended to its south and occupied a larger portion of the Narmadā trench which is about 50-60 miles wide. The town Sainkheda on the southern side of the Narmadā reminds us of Saundikera which is the alternative name of the same janapada as given by the Matsya Purāṇa.

*Tumura, Kiṣkindhaka, Patavi.* Beyond the Tuṇḍikera janapada towards the west, the river Narmadā below its confluence with the Tawa flows in a wider valley, which opens out towards the west. Here the Vindhyan scarp to the north of the valley and the Satpura hills in the south form a sort of a triangular basin with its apex near Hoshangabad where the two come nearest and its base towards the west along the meridian of Khandwa. Beyond this line the two hill systems approach each other between Barvani and Surpan. Thereafter the Narmadā comes out of the mountainous terrain and flows through the western coastal plain into the sea.

As the river flows in a wide flood-plain and is fairly deep, it forms a suitable boundary between the political units north and south of it. This was true as much in ancient times as today.

The Tumura janapada appears to have occupied here the southern basin of the Narmadā. It probably coincided with the western half of the present Hoshangabad district, centred about Seoni-Malva about 20 miles east of Tumurni, a town on the Itarsi-Khandwa railway line.

Further down the Tumura janapada, down the river Narmadā and south of the river, lies the Khandwa-Khargon plain, a region which is strategically important since it controls the southern route through the Khandwa gap into the Tāpti valley. This appears to correspond to the Kiṣkindhaka janapada of the Purāṇas.

Below this janapada and again south of the Narmadā where it receives its southern affluents, the Goi, the Purāṇic janapada of Patavi was probably located at the foothills of the Satpuras which overlook the Narmadā here. The town of Pati a few miles south of Barwani, appears to point to its approximate location.

*Vītihotra.* North of the Narmadā and west of Tuṇḍikera where the northern basin of the Narmadā is wider and where a large number of its biggest affluents meet it from the north, the janapada of Vītihotra appears to have been located. Thus this janapada was bounded in the south by the Narmadā, in the north, west and east by the steep are of the Vindhyan scrap which stood like an impenetrable wall along its borders. Vītihotra therefore covered the whole of the north of the Narmadā drained by the streams known as the Kolar, Jamner, Chankesar and Kanar which stood across and controlled the gaps in the Vindhyan scarp through which the southern routes from Ujjaini passed. The centre of the region appears to be Satwas which lies about 30 miles north-west of modern Harda.

*Anūpa.* The name of this janapada suggests an ill-drained or marshy land. In the context of the Narmadā basin this janapada appears to coincide with the extensive, ill-drained, alluvial tract across which the Narmadā flows just after its release from the Vindhyan-Satpura trench. Anūpa therefore coincided with the southern part of what is today known as Rewa Kantha.

Besides the janapadas discussed above, the various Purāṇas contain the names of a few more janapadas, which vary considerably from Purāṇa to Purāṇa. Perhaps some of the known janapadas mentioned in one Purāṇa lost their importance at the time the other Purāṇas were composed. It is not certain whether the names of janapadas were changed by accident or by design. In the latter case it is possible that some of the janapadas suffered extinction or transformation in human content or extent in course of time, and janapadas with new names came into being. However, the janapadas whose names appear to have been distorted in various Purāṇas but not changed or replaced, are indicated on the accompanying map with the help of other works. The rest have been omitted. The table below gives a complete list of janapadas as given in the Vāyu Purāṇa and its variations in other Purāṇas. This may be helpful to future workers in this field.

## *JANAPADAS (OR COMMUNITIES) OF MADHYADESA OR CENTRAL REGION*

S=same as in the first column; O=omitted)

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kuru | S | S | O | |
| Pāñcāla | S | S | O | |
| Śālva | S | S | O | S (Mbt) |
| Jāṅgala | S | S | O | |
| Śūrasena | S | S | O | S (Mbt) |
| Bhadrakāra | S | S | O | |
| Bodha | Bāhya | S | O | S (Mbt) |
| Śatapatheśvara | Saha<br>Pataccara | S<br>S | O<br>O | |
| Vatsa | Matsya | S | Matsya | |
| Kisalva | Kirāta | Kusaṭṭa | Kūta | |
| Kisadya, Kisaṣṭa | | | | |
| Kulya | S | S | S | |
| Kuntala | S; Kunti | S | S | Kunti (Mbt) |
| Kāśi | S | S | S | Kanti (Mbt) |
| Kośala | S | S | S | |
| Arthaya<br>A(r)thapa | Āvanta | Prathama | Arvuḍa<br>Arthava<br>Athava | |
| Tilaṅga<br>(Bh)Puliṅga | Kaliṅga | Kaliṅga | Kaliṅga | |
| Magadha<br>Maṣaka | Mūka | Magadha | Malaka | |
| Vṛka | Andhaka | S | S | |

## *JANAPADAS OF NORTHERN (& NORTH-WESTERN) REGION*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vāhlīka | S | S | S | S |
| Vaṭa(ḍh)dhāna | S | S | S | S |
| Ābhīra | S | S | S | S |
| Kālatoyaka | S | S | S | Kalatoyaḍa |
| Aparīta | Purandhra | S | Aparānta | Aparānta |
| (Kṣ)Śūdra | S | S | S | S |
| Phal(n)Ava | Pallava | Pallava | Pallava | Pallava |
| Cārmakhaṇḍika | Cattakhaṇḍika | S | S | Sakheṭaka |
| Gāndhāra | S | S | S | S |

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yavana | S | S | Gabala | S |
| Sindhu | S | S | S | S |
| Sauvīra | S | S | S | S |
| M(bh)ādraka | Bhadraka | S | S | Bhadraka |
| Śakahrahda | Satadrava | Śakāhūṇa | Śatadruja | |
| Śakādriha | Śakādruhra | | | |
| Kulinda | Pulinda | Kulinda | Kaliṅga | |
| Lalitta | | | | |
| Parita | Pārada<br>Pareta | Pārada | Pārada | |
| Hārapūrika | Hāramūrtika<br>Hāramūrṣika | Hārahūṇaka | Hārabhūṣika | |
| Ramaṭ(ṭh)a | Rāmaṭha | Ramaṇa | Māṭhara | Māṭha |
| Raddhakaṭka | Kaṇṭakāra | Ruddhkaṭaka | Bahubhadra | Rodakadhāra |
| Kekaya | Kaikaya | Kekaṣa | Kaikeya | Kaikeya |
| Keśapa | Kaikeya | | | |
| Daśamāṇika | Daśamanaka<br>Daśanāmaka | Daśamālika | Daśamālika | Daśamāsttha<br>Daṁśanasttha |
| *Colonies of*: | | | | |
| Kṣatris | S | S | S | Kṣatri colonies of Kṣatris |
| -Upaniveśa | -Upaniveśya | S | S | -Prativaiśya |
| Vaiśya | S | S | S | O (colonies of Vaiśyas) |
| Śūdrakula | S | S | S | S (colonies of Śudras) |
| Kāmboja | O | S | S | S |
| Darada | O | S | S | S |
| Varvara | O | S | S | S |
| Priyalaukika | O | Aṅgalaukika | Harsavardhana<br>Aṅgalaukika | Aṅgalokika<br>Aṅgalaukika |
| C(P)īna | O | S | S | Veṇa |
| Tuṣāra | O | S | S<br>Tukhāra | S |
| Pahlava | O | S | -bahula bahyeto narah= many external people. | |

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| -bāhyatodara<br>-mallakodara<br>-ratnadhāra<br>-kṣatodara | O | -kṣatodara | -bāhyatodara | -bahuda<br>-bāhyato-dara |
| Ātreya | Kṣatryotha<br>Atrayotha | S | S | S |
| Bharadwāj(ak)a | S | S | S | Sabharadwāja |
| Prasthala | S | S | Puṣkala<br>Prasthala | Prasthala |
| Kaseruka | Sadaseraka<br>Sahasaubhaka | S | Kaśeruka<br>Kuśeruka<br>Daśeraka | Daśeraka |
| Lampāka | S | S | S | |
| Tanap(k)a<br>Tanasa<br>Tālkūna<br>Tānaka<br>Sūlika | Talanāga<br>Talagāna<br>Taṅgaṇa | Tanapa | Śūlakāra | |
| Pīḍika<br>Cūdika | Sainika | Pīḍika | Culika | Cūḍika |
| Juhuḍa<br>Jagara | Jāṅgala | Juhuḍa | Jāguḍa | Taṅgaṇa |
| Apasa, Apaga | O | Apaga | Aupadha<br>Auṣadha | Alasa |
| Ali-madra | O | S | Ani-madra<br>Ali-bhadra<br>Ani-bhadra | Ali-bhadra |
| Kirāta | O | S | S | S |
| Tomara | O | S | Tāmasa | Tāmasa |
| Haṁsamārga | O | S | S | Karmamārga |
| Kāśmīra | O | S | S | Supārśwa |
| Taṅgaṇa | O | S | S<br>Suṅgaṇa<br>Tumaṇa | Gaṇaka |
| Culika<br>Cūlika | O | S | Śūlika | Kulūto<br>Kulūta |
| Cāhuka | O | S | Kuhaka | Kuhika |
| Bāhuka<br>Pūrṇa | O | Ūrṇa | Jarṇa<br>Ūrṇa | Tūrṇa |

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Darva | O | S | Dārva<br>Darva | Kukkuṭa |

### *JANAPADAS OF APARĀNTA OR WESTERN REGION*

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sūrpākāra | O | Śūrpāraka | Sūryāraka | Śūrpāraka |
| Kolavana | O | S | Kālibala | Vāridhāna |
| Durga | O | S | S | Durgala (Mbt). |
| Kālītaka<br>Tallītaka | O | Kālīkata | Ānīkata | Tālīkata |
| Puleya | Kulīya | S | Pulinda | Pulīya |
| Surāla | Sirala | S | Sumīna | Asinīla |
| Rūpas(k)a | O | Rūpasa | Rūpapa | Tāpasa |
| Tāp(m)asa | Taittirika | Tāpasa | Svāpada | Tāmasa |
| Rasita | | Rasita | Kurumina | Bhamina |
| Ramina | | | | |
| Tarūpaṇa | | | | |
| Kāraskara<br>Parakṣara | Kāraskara | Parakṣara | Kaṭhākṣara<br>Kāraskara | Kāraskara |
| Nāsikyādya | Vāsika<br>Bāsikya | S | Nāsikyava | Nāsikānta |
| Antara-Ṇarmada | S | S | Uttara-Narmada | Sunarmada |
| Bhān(r)ukaccha | Bhārukaccha | Bhārukaccha | Bhīrukaccha | Dārukaccha |
| Samāheya | S | S | S | Sumāheya |
| Kacchīya | Kācchīka<br>Kacchīka | S | Kāśmīra | Vātsīya |
| Surāṣṭra | Saurāṣṭra | S | S | S |
| Ānarta | S | S | Avanti | Āvanti |
| Arbuda | S | S | S | S |

### *JANAPADAS OF EASTERN REGION*

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Andhra | Aṅga | Andhra | Abhra<br>Adhrāraka<br>Andhra | Aṅga |
| Vāka | Vaṅga | Vāka | Vaka | Vaṅga |
| Mudrakaraka | Bhadguraka | | Mudgaraka | Madhgurava |
| | Madguraka | Sujaraka | Mudakara | |
| Sujaraka | Bhadravaka | | | |
| Antargiri<br>Prātragira | S | S | S | Swantargiri |
| Bahirgiri (a) | S | S | S | S |

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pravaṅga | Plavaṅga | S | S | S |
| Vaṅgeya | Māthaṅga | Vaṅga | Raṅgeya | Vāṅgeya |
| Mālad(v)a | Yamaka | S | Mānada | Mānsāda |
| Mālavartin(k)a | Mallavarṇka | Mālvaṇika | Mānavartika | Valadantikā |
| Brahmottarā | Suhmottra | S | Brāhmottarā | S |
| Pravijaya | S | S | S | S |
| Bhārgava | S<br>Mārgava | S | S | S |
| Geyamarthaka | Geyamālava<br>Ārya Gālava<br>Mālava | S | Geyamallaka | Geyamaryaka<br>Geyamarṣaka |
| Prāgyotiṣa | S | S | S | S |
| Muṇḍa | Puṇḍra | Pauṇḍra | Madra | Pṛṣadhra |
| Videha | S | S | S | S |
| Tāmraliptaka | S | S | S | S |
| Māla | Śālva | S | Malla | S |
| Magadha | S | S | S | S |
| Govinda | Gonardda | Gonanda | Gomanta<br>Gomeda | Mānanda |

## JANAPADAS OF SOUTHERN REGION

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pāṇḍya | S | S | Puṇḍra<br>S | Pundra |
| Kerala | S | S | S<br>Kevala | S |
| Caulya | Cola | S | Cola | Cauḍa |
| Kulya | S | S | Kutya | S |
| Setuka | S | S | Śailaṣa | Jānuka |
| Mūṣika | Sūtika | S | S | S |
| Rumana | | | Kumāra | Kumārāda |
| Kumana | Kupatha | Kunāsa | Kusuma | |
| Vanavāsika | Vājivāsika<br>Vajikāśika | Vānavāsaka | Nāma-vāsaka<br>Vanavāsaka | Mahāśaka |
| Mahārāṣṭra | Navrāṣṭra | S | S | S |
| Māhiṣaka | S | S | S | S |
| Kaliṅga | S | S | S | S |
| Ā(A)bhīra | Kapila<br>Kāruṣa<br>Kāvera | S | S | S |

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caiṣīka | Haiṣīka<br>Hoṣīka | Caiṣīka | Vaiśikya | Vaisakya |
| Āṭavya | S | S | S<br>Āḍhakya | Āraṇya |
| Vara<br>Śavara | Śabara | Vara | Śavara | Śabara |
| Pulinda | S | S | S | S |
| Vindhya-Mūlīka | Vindhya-Puṣika | S | Vindhya-mauleya | Vindhya-Śauleya |
| V(ai)idarbha | S | S | S | S |
| Daṇḍaka | S | S | S | S |
| Pānika<br>Pāunika | O | Śaulika | Paurika | O |
| Maul(n)ika | O | S | S | O |
| Aśmaka | O | S | S | S |
| Bhogavardhana | O | S | S | S |
| Nairṇika<br>Naitika | O | Maindika | Naiṣika | Naimika |
| Kuntala | O | S | S | Kundala |
| Andhra | O | S | S | S |
| Udbhida | O | S | S | Ulida<br>Ucchida |
| Nalakālika | O | S | Vanadāraka | Nalakāraka |

## *JANAPADAS OF THE VINDHYAN REGION*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mālav(d)a | S | S | Saraja | Kalavya |
| Karūṣa | S | S | Karuṣa | Kāruṣa |
| Mekala<br>Rokala | S | S | Kerala | S |
| Utkala | S | S | S | S |
| Uttamā(a)rṇa | Auṇḍra-māsha | Uttamarṇa | Uttamarṇa | Uttamarṇa |
| Daśārṇa | S | S | S | S |
| Bhoja | S | S | Bhojya | Gopta |
| Kiṣkindhaka | S | S | S | Kikarava |
| Tosala | Tośala | S | Tośala | Tośala |
| Kosala | S | Kośala | Kośala | Śokala |
| Trapura | Traipura | Traipura | Taipura<br>Traipura | Traipura |
| Vaidika | Vaidiśa | Vaidiśa | Vaidiśa | Khelliśa |

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

| *Vy* | *Mts* | *Bmd* | *Mārk* | *Vmn & others* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tumura | S | S | Tumbura | Turaga |
| Tharpura | Tumuva | | Tumbara | |
| Tumbura | Tambara<br>Tumbara | S | Tumbula | Tumbara |
| Ṣaṭsura<br>Ṣattumāna | Padgama | Ṣatsura | Patavi(a) | Vahela |
| Niṣadhapadha | S | S | S | S |
| Naiṣadha | | | Naiṣadha | |
| Anūpa | Arūpa | S | Annaja | S |
| Aṇupa | | | Anūpa | |
| Tuṇḍikera | Śaundikera | S | Tuṇḍikeśa<br>Tuṣtikāra | S |
| Vītihotra | S | S | Vīrahotra | S |
| Avanti | S | S | S | S |
| | *JANAPADAS OF MOUNTAIN REGIONS* | | | |
| Nigarhara | Nirāhāra | S | Nīhāra | Nirāhāra |
| Haṁsamārga | Sarvaga | S | S | S |
| Kuṇapa<br>Kṣupaṇa | Kupatha | Kupatha | Kurava | Kupatha |
| Taṅgaṇa | Apathā | S | Gurgaṇa | S |
| Trasa<br>Khasa<br>Swasa | O | Khasa | Khasa | Khaśa |
| Kuśaprāvaraṇa<br>Karṇaprāvaraṇa | Kuthaprāvaraṇa | Karṇaprāvaraṇa | Kuntaprāvaraṇa | Kuthaprāvaraṇa |
| Hūṇa | Urṇa | S | U(Ū)rṇa | Ūrṇa |
| Darva | S | S | Dārva | Pluṣṭa |
| Sahūdaka | Samudgaka | Bahūdaka | Sakṛtraka | Sahūhuka |
| Trigarta | S | S | S | S |
| Mālava | Mandala | Malaya | S<br>Gālava | |
| Kirāta | S | S | S | S |
| Tāmara<br>Tāmasa | Cāmara | Tāmasa | Tāmasa | Tomra<br>Shashikha-Drika |

# CHAPTER XI Bharatavarsa: Janapadas, Towns and Routes (Geographical Analysis)

IF we study the Purāṇic lists of people, or janapadas discussed above, in relation to the physiographic features of the country we realise that

1. The people named in the lists may be grouped as follows:

(a) Those living in the plains, i. e. the Indo-Gangetic plain and the eastern and western coastal plains with adjoining valleys. These correspond to the central, north-western, western and eastern regions of Bhāratavarṣa.

(b) The people of Peninsular India or the Deccan Plateau, which corresponds to the southern region of Bhāratavarṣa.

(c) The people of the Himālayan Mts and the Vindhyan, Aravalli and Chhota-Nagpur hills regions. These correspond to the 'Vindhyan' and 'mountainous' regions of Bhāratavarṣa.

2. In all the regions mentioned above the rivers play a very significant part. As mentioned earlier, the rivers are either zones of assimilation or segregation. In (a) above, the rivers are usually wide and of considerable volume and wherever they had broad flood-plains, they formed the boundaries between janapadas or people living on either side. The following are a few examples:

| *People* | *Rivers bounding their territory* | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaikeyas | R. Jhelum and R.Chenab | |
| Madras | R. Chenab and R. Rāvī | |
| Mallas | R. Rāvī and R. Beas | River Beas was formerly an independent river flowing into Panchanād. |
| Trigartas | R. Beas and R. Sutlej | |
| Kurus | R. Sutlej and R. Gaṅgā | |
| Pañcālas | R. Gaṅgā and R. Gogrā | |
| Kośalas | R. Gogrā and R. Rapti | |

| *People* | *Rivers bounding their territory* | *Location* |
|---|---|---|
| Vidhiyas | R. Rapti and R. Kosi | |
| Puṇḍras | R. Yamunā and R. Brahmaputrā | R. Yamunā (in Bengal) |
| Vangas | R. Gaṅgā-Padmā and R. Bhāgīrathī | In Bengal |

3. There is a sub-division of this class where the population occupied one bank of a major river, the territorial limits on the other being defined roughly by a desert, forest or the steep slope of a mountain or hill-range. Such cases are exemplified in the following list:

| *People* | *River on the bank of which they lived* | | *Location* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patachchāras | R. Yamunā | South bank | Banda dist. |
| Kāśī | R. Gaṅgā | North bank | Vārāṇasi |
| Kuntalas | R. Gaṅgā | South bank | Chunar |
| Magadhas | R. Gaṅgā | South bank | Patna |
| Prāgjyotiṣas | R. Brahmaputrā | Left bank | |
| Aṅgas | R. Gaṅgā | South bank | Bhagalpur |
| Vītihotras | R. Narmadā (middle) | North bank | |

4. On the other hand, minor (i.e., narrow, shallow or non-perennial) rivers on the plains and all rivers on the plateaus, hilly or mountainous regions were the zones of attraction where each stream or river is represented in the Purāṇic list by one or more people who inhabited both of its banks along its course. Such cases are so numerous, that as a rule, many population groups can be associated with a single river, e.g.:

| *People* | *River on which they lived* | *Location* |
|---|---|---|
| Sūrasena | R. Yamunā | Muttra |
| Hāra-hūras | R. Hari Rud | Herat |
| Daradas | R. Gilgit | Gilgit |
| Chīnas | R. Indus | Ladakh |
| Kāśmīras | R. Jhelum | Srinagar |
| Kulūtas | R. Beas | Kulu valley |
| Kolavanas | R. Girna | Kalvan (Nasik dist.) |
| Muralás | R. Muria | Western India |
| Māhiyas | R. Māhī | |
| Sāraswatas | R. Saraswatī | Patna |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Arbudas | R. Banas (source) | Palanpur-Sirohi |
| Māhiṣakas | R. Kāverī (upper) | |
| Colas | R. Kāverī (middle) | |
| Kāveras | R. Kāverī (mouth) | |
| Mūṣika | R. Musi | Hyderabad |
| Maulikas | R. Godāvarī (upper) | |
| Aśmakas | R. Godāvarī (middle) | |
| Āndhras | R. Godāvarī and Kṛṣṇā | Deltas |
| Vidharbhas | R. Wardha | |
| Tripuras | R. Narmadā (upper) | |
| Vidiśas | R. Besa | |
| Daśārṇas | R. Dhasan (upper & middle) | |
| Niṣadas | R. Sindh (upper and middle) | Narwar (Gwalior) |
| Tuṇḍikeras | R. Narmadā (upper) | |

5. There are quite a few names of people which were associated with the names of places, i. e., of towns and cities or regions, to which they gave their name or vice versa:

| *People* | | *Place or region with which they were associated* |
|---|---|---|
| Kāśī | .. | Kāśi |
| Avantis | .. | Avanti (Western Malwa Plateau) |
| Kālatoyas | .. | Kalāt |
| Gandhāras | .. | Gandhāra (Lower Kabul Valley plus the Salt Range Plateau) |
| Varvaras | .. | Varvara (Barbaricum) Indus Delta |
| Tuṣāras | .. | Tochi valley |
| Lampākas | .. | Lamshān |
| Kāśmīras | .. | Kashmir |
| Kulūtas | .. | Kulu |
| Maldas | .. | Malda region of Bengal |
| Prāgjyotiṣas | .. | Prāgjyotiṣa (Brahmaputrā Valley) |
| Tāmraliptikas | .. | Tāmralipti (Tamluk) |
| Magadhas | .. | Magadha (Bihar south of the Gaṅgā) |
| Nāsikyas | .. | Nasik |
| Kacchīyas | .. | Cutch |
| Saurāṣṭras | .. | Saurāṣṭra |
| Arbudas | .. | Arbuda (Abu) |
| Keralas | .. | Kerala |
| Kumāras | .. | Cape Comorin |
| Mahārāṣṭras | .. | Mahārāṣṭra |

| *People* | *Place or region with which they were associated* |
|---|---|
| Kaliṅgas | Kaliṅga |
| Vidarbhas | Vidarbha |
| Mālavas | Malva plateau |
| Mekalas | Mekal plateau |
| Utkalas | Utkala |
| Tośalas | Tosalī (Orissa) |

Another classification of peoples mentioned in the Purāṇas could be based on their political status and on the stage of civilisation or social advancement. Thus people can be divided into:

(a) Those who belonged to a fairly well-developed society and formed independent kingdoms or republics. The territory of these people gave shape to the political map of India and the adjacent lands.

(b) Those who were considered minor population groups and formed in many cases part of the bigger units mentioned in (a) above.

(c) Those who were definitely inferior socially and politically.

The following Purāṇic janapadas belong to class (a) above:

(i) *In Madhya Deśa*:
Matsya, Kāśi, Kośala, Kuru, Pāñcāla, Śalva, Śūfasenas.

(ii) *In Aparānta and Udiya Deśa (or north-western region)*:
Vahlika, Gandhāra, Sindhu, Sauvīra, Madra, Kaikeya.

(iii) *In Prācya Deśa*:
Vijji-Videha, Magadha, Añga and Vañga, Suhma.

(iv) *In Dakṣiṇa Deśa*:
Pāndya, Kerala, Mahārāṣṭra, Kaliṅga, Asmaka, Āndhra.

(v) *Aparānta or Western country*:
Saurāṣṭra.

(vi) *Vindhyan Region*:
Utkala, Dasārṇa, Tripura, Vidīsa, Avanti.

To class (c) above belonged the people who dwelt in the hills (Himālayan and Peninsular), Kulutas (Kulu valley), Khasas, Arbudas, etc., or those who lived in forests, e.g., Mekalas, Niṣadhas, Hansmargas, Tāmasas, etc.

The rest of the janapadas may be placed in category (b) above.

*Towns and cities.* The Purāṇas do not give a complete list of important cities and towns of Bhārata as such. There are, however, scattered references to capital or major cities or centres of religious importance in some of the Purāṇas. But a composite picture of urban centres or human agglomerations of Ancient India can be obtained with the help of contemporary Sanskrit, Buddhist (Sanskrit and Pali) and Jain literature. The accounts of foreign writers and travellers (particularly the Chinese) are quite helpful in finding and locating them. Cunningham, Law, Sarcar and other writers have mentioned many, if not all the important centres of Ancient India. It is with the help of their works that the accompanying map of 'Cities and Towns of Ancient India' has been prepared. It gives the most probable sites of cities and towns mentioned in various works. It is not claimed that the map is complete. Many centres had to be left out on account of ambiguity regarding their name or site. It will, however, be helpful in visualising the pattern of population concentration in Ancient India, and also in locating the ancient routes depicted on the next map (Ancient Routes).

A study of the above map (of 'Ancient Towns and Cities') brings out the following facts:

(i) Practically all capital cities were located on major rivers and occupied a site on their high banks or levees. This was natural since the other low bank and the adjoining plain was subject to inundation during the period the river carried the maximum amount of water. Strategically such sites had the advantage of protection by the river on at least one and sometimes three sides. The following table gives a list of the major or capital cities and their association with rivers:

| *City* | *Capital of* | *River on which it stood* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Puṣkalavatī | Gandharas | R. Swat | Near the confluence of R. Swat with R. Kabul. |
| Śākala | Madras (Jartikas & Bahikas) | R. Āpagā or Ayak Nadī | By a hill 200′ high surrounded on all sides by a seasonal swamp |
| Indraprastha | Kurus | R. Yamunā, R. bank | |
| Hastināpura | Kurus | R. Gaṅgā, R. bank | |
| Mathurā | Śūrasenas | R. Yamunā, R. bank | |
| Ahicchatra | Uttara Pāñcāla | R. Rāmagaṅgā, R. bank | Modern Ramnagar |
| Kāmpilya | Dakṣiṇa Pāñcāla | R. Gaṅgā, R. bank | |

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

| *City* | *Capital of* | *Rivers on which it stood* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ayodhyā | Kosala | R. Ghagara, R. bank | Ayodhyā was the earlier capital, Sāketa was, later. |
| Sāketa | Kosala | R. Ghagara, R. bank | In Buddha's time Ayodhyā had become unimportant. |
| Srāvastī | Uttara Kosala | R. Rapti, R. bank | |
| Kosambī | Vaṁśa | R. Jamunā | |
| Kāśī | Kāśi | R. Gaṅgā, L. bank | |
| Pāṭaliputra | Magadha | R. Gaṅgā, L. bank | |
| Campā | Aṅga | R. Gaṅgā, L. bank | |
| Vaisali | Licchavis (Land of Vrijjis) | R. Gaṅgā, L. bank | |
| Tāmralipti | Tāmraliptis | | |
| Potana | Assakas | R. Godāvarī | |
| Paithan | Maulikas | R. Godāvarī | |
| Basim | Vidarbha | R. Pus, R. bank | |
| Madurai | Pāṇḍyas | R. Vaigai, R. bank | |
| Bhṛgukaccha | Bhṛgukacchas | R. Narmadā | |
| Sopara | Aparānta or Sunapazant | R. Tāptī | |
| Māhiṣmatī | Māhiṣmatī (southern Avanti) | R. Narmadā | |
| Ujjayinī | Avanti | R. Siprā | |
| Tripura | Tripuras, Kalchuries | R. Narmadā | |
| Vaisali | Vajjis and Licchavis | R. Gaṇḍak, L. bank | |
| Vidiśā | Vidiśas | R. Betwa | |
| Virāṭa | Matsya | R. Sabi | Modern Bairat |
| Kuśāvatī or Kusīnārā | Mallas | R. Little Gaṇḍak | Modern Kasia |

(ii) Another class of cities or towns besides the riparian settlements mentioned above, which played an important part in the population pattern of Bhārata were the coastal towns which were the *entrepôts* of trade and developed into ports at some time or the other in Indian history. These were:

*On the Eastern Coast*

Rampala Gangetic Delta
Tāmralipti
Dantapara
Kāvirippūmbattanam
Kolkai (?)

| | |
|---|---|
| *On the Western Coast* | Puram |
| | Tiru Vanjikkala |
| | Candaura |
| | Surparaka |
| *On the Western Coast* | Bharukaccha |
| | Vallabhi (?) |
| | Dvarvati |

It is to be noted that the importance of the coastal towns waxed and waned during the course of Indian history. The western coastal towns (of Gujarat) played an important part in the earliest period, when the trade and commerce by the Persians, Phoenicians and contemporary Indians was at its zenith. The eastern coast settlements developed trade and commerce during a later period when communication with the Malaya peninsula, the East Indies and China was established and Greater India included the eastern seaboard of the Bay of Bengal. In the next period, i.e., in the pre-medieval and medieval period the western coastal settlements, particularly those of Kerala, developed into big ports.

(iii) The other cities or towns which are not particularly associated with rivers, lakes or sea, are those whose location is based on (a) strategy (b) religious sanctity or (c) routes.

A glance at the map of India would show that there were three areas which favoured urban development more than elsewhere in the country. These were:

(a) The piedmont belt of the upper Indus basin;

(b) The Gangetic basin as a whole, leaving out the Sunderbans;

(c) The Mahānadī delta;

(d) The south-eastern coastal plain;

(e) The plateau region near the headwaters of the Kṛṣṇā and the Godāvarī;

(f) The coastal plain adjoining the Gulf of Cambay;

(g) The Malva plateau.

Incidentally, all these regions fall outside the negative areas shown on the map.

*Routes.* The above statement is directly linked with the route pattern of ancient India. The route map (see Fig. 17) clearly brings out the following facts:

(a) The trunk route from Puṣkalavatī to Śarāvastī followed the piedmont belt of the Himālayas. It apparently tried to adhere as closely as possi-

Fig. 16

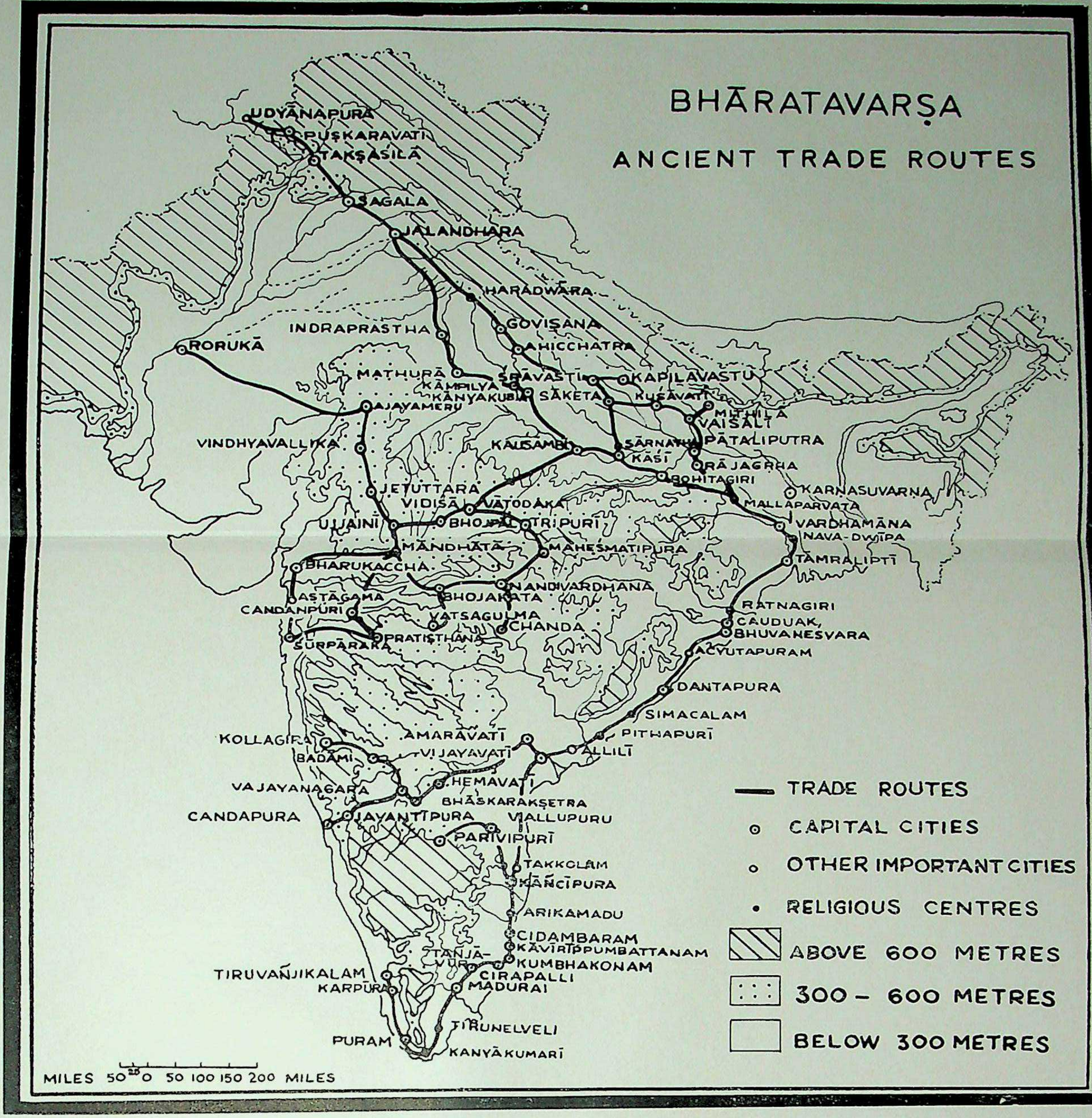
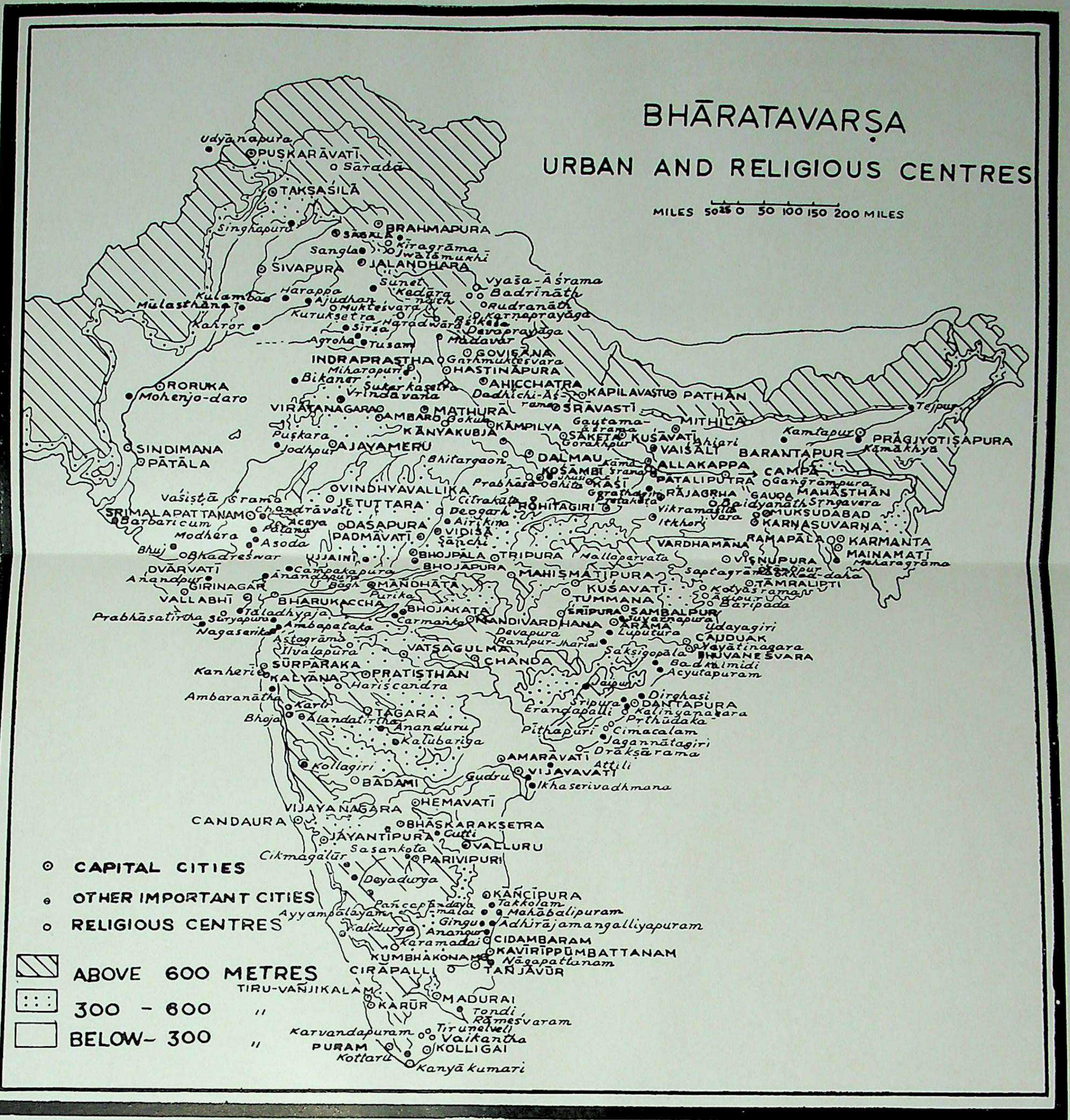

BHĀRATAVARṢA
ANCIENT TRADE ROUTES
UDYĀNAPURA
PUṢKARAVATĪ
TAKṢAŚILĀ
SAGALA
JALANDHARA
HARADWĀRA
GOVIṢANA
AHICCHATRA
INDRAPRASTHA
RORUKĀ
MATHURĀ
KĀMPILYA
KĀNYAKUBJA
ŚRĀVASTĪ
SĀKETA
KAPILAVASTU
KUŚĀVATĪ
MITHILĀ
VAIŚĀLĪ
PĀTALIPUTRA
AJAYAMERU
VINDHYAVALLIKA
KAUŚĀMBĪ
SĀRNĀTH
KĀŚĪ
RĀJAGṚHA
ROHITAGIRI
KARNASUVARNA
MALLAPARVATA
VARDHAMĀNA
NAVA-DWĪPA
TĀMRALIPTĪ
JETUTTARA
VIDIŚĀ
VĀTODAKA
UJJAINĪ
BHOJPĀL
TRIPURĪ
MĀNDHĀTĀ
MAHEŚMATIPURA
BHARUKACCHA
NANDIVARDHANA
AŚTAGAMA
BHOJAKATA
CANDANPURI
VATSAGULMA
CHANDA
PRATIṢTHĀNA
ŚŪRPĀRAKA
RATNAGIRI
CAUDUAK,
BHUVANEŚVARA
ACYUTAPURAM
DANTAPURA
SIMACALAM
PITHAPURĪ
ALLILĪ
KOLLAGIRA
AMARĀVATĪ
BĀDĀMI
VIJAYAVATĪ
VAJAYANAGARA
HEMAVATĪ
BHĀSKARAKṢETRA
CANDAPURA
JAYANTĪPURA
VALLUPURU
PARIVIPURĪ
TAKKOLAM
KĀÑCĪPURA
ARIKAMADU
CIDAMBARAM
KĀVIRĪPPUMBATTANAM
TANJĀ-
VŪR
KUMBHAKONAM
CIRAPALLI
TIRUVAÑJIKALAM
KARPŪRA
MADURAI
TIRUNELVELI
PURAM
KANYĀKUMARĪ
MILES 50 25 0 50 100 150 200 MILES
TRADE ROUTES
CAPITAL CITIES
OTHER IMPORTANT CITIES
RELIGIOUS CENTRES
ABOVE 600 METRES
300 – 600 METRES
BELOW 300 METRES

Fig. 17



BHĀRATAVARṢA

URBAN AND RELIGIOUS CENTRES

MILES 50 25 0 50 100 150 200 MILES
Udyānapura
PUṢKARĀVATĪ
Sāradā
TAKṢAŚILĀ
Singhapura
BRAHMAPURA
ŚĀKALA
Kīragrāma
Sangla
Jwālāmukhī
ŚIVAPURA
JALANDHARA
Sunet
Vyāsa-Āśrama
Kedāranāth
Badrīnāth
Harappā
Kulamba
Ajudhan
Mūlasthāna
Mukteśvara
Rudranāth
Kuruksetra
Haradwāra
Ṛṣikeśa
Karnaprayāga
Kahror
Sirsā
Devaprayāga
Agroha
Tusam
Madavar
GOVIṢĀṆA
INDRAPRASTHA
Garhmukteśvara
Mihiropuri
HASTINĀPURA
RORUKA
Bikaner
AHICCHATRA
Mohenjo-daro
Sukarkasetra
Vṛndāvana
Dadhichi-Āśrama
KAPILAVASTU
PATHAN
VIRĀṬANAGARA
MATHURĀ
ŚRĀVASTĪ
AMBARA
Gokula
Gautama-Āśrama
MITHILĀ
Tejpur
KĀNYAKUBJA
KĀMPILYA
SĀKETA
KUŚĀVATĪ
Puṣkara
Gorakhpur
Bhiari
Kamtapur
PRĀGJYOTIṢAPURA
SINDIMANA
Jodhpur
AJAYAMERU
VAIŚĀLĪ
BARANTAPUR
Kāmākhyā
PĀTĀLA
Bhitargaon
DALMAU
ALLAKAPPA
KOŚĀMBĪ
PĀṬALIPUTRA
CAMPĀ
Prabhāsa
Bhita
KĀŚĪ
Gangrāmpura
VINDHYAVALLIKĀ
Gṛdhrakūṭa
RĀJAGṚHA
GAUḌA
MAHĀSTHĀN
Vaśiṣṭā Āśrama
JETUTTARA
Citrakūṭa
Sṛngavera
ŚRĪMĀLAPATTANAM
Chandrāvatī
Deogarh
ROHITĀGIRI
Vikramaśilā
Baidyanāth
MUKSUDABAD
Barbaricum
Acaya
DAŚAPURA
Airikiṇa
Ithkhori
KARṆASUVARṆA
Modhera
Pātana
Asoda
PADMĀVATĪ
VIDIŚĀ
Sāñcī
RĀMAPĀLA
KARMANTA
Bhuj
Bhadreśwar
UJJAINĪ
BHOJPĀLA
TRIPURA
Nallaparvata
VARDHAMĀNA
VIṢṆUPURA
MAINAMATĪ
DVĀRVATĪ
Campakapura
BHOJAPURA
Saptagrāma
Tāmpur
Khad-daha
Maharagrāma
Anandpur
Ānandapura
MĀHIṢMATĪPURA
GIRINAGAR
Bāgh
MĀNDHĀTĀ
KUŚĀVATĪ
TĀMRALIPTI
Kotyāsrama
Agipur
VALLABHĪ
BHARUKACCHA
Purikā
TUMMANA
Baripada
Taladhvaja
BHOJAKAṬA
ŚRĪPURA
SAMBALPUR
Prabhāsatīrtha
Sūryapura
Carmanka
NANDIVARDHANA
Suvarṇapura
Udayagiri
Nagaserika
Ambapataka
ĀRĀMA
Lupurura
CAUDUAK
Aṣṭagrāma
Devapura
Yayātinagara
Ilvalapura
VATSAGULMA
Ranipur-Jhariai
Sakṣigopāla
BHUVANEŚVARA
SŪRPĀRAKA
CHANDA
Badamidi
Kanheri
KALYĀṆA
PRATIṢṬHĀN
Acyutapuram
Hariścandra
Jaipur
Ambaranātha
Dīrghasi
Śrīpura
DANTAPURA
Kārli
Erandapalli
Kalinganagara
Bhoja
Ālandatīrtha
TAGARA
Pṛthūdaka
Ānanduru
Piṭhapuri
Cimacalam
Kalubariga
Jagannātagiri
AMARĀVATĪ
Drākṣārāma
Attili
Kollagiri
Gudru
VIJAYAVĀṬĪ
BĀDĀMI
Ikhaserivadhmana
VIJAYANAGARA
HEMAVATĪ
CANDAURA
BHĀSKARAKṢETRA
JAYANTIPURA
Cutti
Sasankota
VALLURU
Cikmagalūr
PARIVIPURI
Doyadurga
KĀÑCĪPURA
Paccaplandaya malai
Takkolam
Ayyampālayam
Mahābalipuram
Gingu
Adhirājamangalliyapuram
Kalidurga
Ananour
CIDAMBARAM
Karamadai
KUMBHAKONAM
KĀVIRIPPŪMBATTANAM
Nāgapattanam
CIRĀPALLI
TAÑJĀVŪR
TIRU-VAÑJIKALAM
MADURAI
KARŪR
Tondi
Rāmeśvaram
Karvandapuram
Tirunelveli
Vaikantha
PURAM
KOLLIGAI
Kottaru
Kanyā kumārī
CAPITAL CITIES
OTHER IMPORTANT CITIES
RELIGIOUS CENTRES
ABOVE 600 METRES
300 - 600 "
BELOW- 300 "

ble (avoiding the Terai and flooded terrain) to the Himālayan foothills and crossed the mighty Himālayan rivers before they gained volume and developed extensive flood-plains. The other important route was from Indraprastha to Tāmralipti which kept to the south of the Gaṅgā and was the forerunner of the famous Grand Trunk Road which took shape later.

Three routes connected the Indo-Gangetic plain with the south. In fact the first two, i.e., the Indraprastha-Ujjaini and Kosambi-Vidiśa routes provided access to Central and Western India while the third which ran parallel to the East Coast from Tāmralipti reached the southernmost tip of the peninsula, branching into valley routes of the Godāvarī, the Kṛṣṇā and the Kāverī. This was the Great South Road in the real sense of the term. The cross-routes from Śarāvastī and Vaiśāli to Kāśī and Rajagarh directly completed the networks of the routes in ancient India.

# CHAPTER XII Bharatavarsa: Adjacent Islands and Peninsulas

AS mentioned earlier, Chapter 48 of the Vāyu Purāṇa[1] entitled 'The description of lands adjacent to Jambū Dwīpa' is of special significance in the context of the geographical limits of Bhāratavarṣa. We proceed to examine its contents. It says that:

> To the south of Bhāratavarṣa there is an ocean (Mahāsāgara) which is more than 10,000 yojanas in extent (1).
>
> There is a big mountain chain (Mahā-kul-Parvata) named Vidyutvan which runs thrice for 3,000 yojanas. It abounds in flowers and fruits and contains innumerable peaks and ranges (2, 3).
>
> There flow thousands of rivers of fine and tasty water. It has also tanks and wells containing fresh water (4).
>
> In the extensive intervening valleys and broad plains there live various groups of men and women in large numbers (5, 6).
>
> There are numerous towns in the midst of the mountains. These towns, walled and having only one gate, are linked with one another and lie along single routes (7).
>
> The indigenous population consists of people who grow long beards and whiskers, radiant like a blue cloud and who live for eighty years (8).
>
> They are food-gatherers and live like monkeys on fruits and roots of plants. They are uncultured and are devoid of clean ways of living (9).
>
> They are short-statured people (10).

The idea conveyed by the above paragraphs is that of a very extensive mountainous region near the Southern Ocean containing at least three long and high parallel ranges.[2] The region is fairly well-watered and populated. On the mountains live indigenous people, uncultured, bearded, and scattered on the rugged and forested terrain. In the plains and valleys live different groups or races of people who possess towns and cities. This is indicative of an agricultural and settled population.

The only region or land which answers to this description is Burmā. The Arakan Yoma runs by and parallel to the coast for 'three thousand yojanas' into the Southern Ocean. This range combined with the Pegu Yoma and Shan mountains gives it the phenomenal breadth emphasised in the Purāṇic description. The Kachins, the Arakanese, the Talaings, the Karens and the Chins are the various population types referred to by the Purāṇas. The Vidyutvan Mt. is obviously the Arakan Yoma (including the interior parallel ranges).

Beyond this region, says the Purāṇa:

> There are all around that dwīpa, islands of as many as 20, 30, 50, 60, 80, 100 and even 1,000 yojanas (11). They are extensive islands full of different types of creatures and, besides them, there are clusters of thousands of small islands (12).

This is true, since not only is the Arakan coast dotted with numerous islands, but its continuation towards the south leads one to the Andaman and Nicobar islands which have been noted by the Purāṇics and included in the dwīpa of Vidyutvan according to the above statement.

The Purāṇa then gives an account of the six 'different dwīpas' of Jambū Dwīpa which protrude into the Southern Ocean. They are named as Aṅga Dwīpa, Yama Dwīpa, Malaya Dwīpa, Śaṅkha Dwīpa, Kuśa Dwīpa and Varāha Dwīpa. The main features of these dwīpas gleaned from the Purāṇa are summarised below.

1. *Aṅga Dwīpa* (*15-18*)

(i) It is fairly extensive and contains a number of small states.

(ii) It is populated by many groups of 'Malechhas'.

(iii) Gold, gems and corals (Muṅga) are found in abundance there.

(iv) It is 'adorned' with beautiful rivers, mountains and forests.

(v) It lies by the 'Lavan Sea'.

(vi) There is a mountain named Cakaragiri in this dwīpa, amidst the land of serpents (Nāgadeśa). The two ends of this mountain touch the sea. There are a number of rivers, falls and caves in this mountain range. Various types of creatures live in these caves.

The pointers (i) caves, (ii) gold and corals, (iii) Malechhas, (iv) serpents and (v) aggregate of small states suggest that Aṅga Dwīpa is the same as the Malaya Peninsula. The natural limestone caves are a prominent feature of the western coast of Malaya, gold is found in the interior districts of the Peninsula in Selangor and corals on its adjoining coast.

2. *Yama Dwīpa* (19)

(i) It contains a mountain named the Dyutiman which gives rise to many rivers.

(ii) It abounds in gems and produces gold.

This is all the information which we can gather from the Purāṇa regarding this dwīpa.

Alberuni in his *India* (p. 157, transl. i. 303) says, 'Yama Koti is, according to Yaqub (*b.* Tariq) and Al Fazari (*c.* 754-775 A.D.) the country of which the city "Tara" (read as Bara) is in the sea. I have not found the slightest trace of this name (i.e., Tara or Bara) in Indian literature. As "Koti" means "castle" and Yama is the "Angel of Death", the word reminds me of Kangdiz, which according to the Persians, had been built by Kay-Kaus or Jam, in the most remote east, behind the sea....' Reinand has shown that the Indian Yama Koti represents the Persian Jamgard. Alberuni puts it at 190° 51′ longitude on the equator, which indicates that Yama Koti is locted somewhere in Sumātrā, Malaya or Jāvā.

Malaya has been identified by us with the Purāṇic Aṅga Dwīpa; the presence of gold and gems, particularly the former, rules out Jāvā, hence in all probability the Purāṇic Yama Dwīpa represents the island of Sumātrā. This dwīpa, according to the Chinese annals of the Sung dynasty (960-1279), was ruled by the kings of San-fo-tsi, i.e., the Srivijaya kings of Palembang (in Sumātrā) who had the title of Chan-Pei which (according to Ferrand) must be the equivalent (in Chinese pronunciation) of the Arabic Jaba (or Yama).

### 3. *Malaya Dwīpa* (20)

Its chief characteristics according to the Purāṇa are:

(i) Presence of gold and precious stones.

(ii) Sandalwood in abundance.

(iii) A large number of rivers and mountains including the beautiful Malaya range. It has mines of silver and is covered with flowers and fruits and is considered sacred.

(iv) ✓The highly respected Āśrama of Agastya is located on the Malaya Mt., which is as pleasant as the heavens. This mountain is popularly known as Mahāmalaya.

(v) There is another mountain, Mandara, which is famous all over the world. It is the abode of gods and Ṛṣis. This mountain too has an Āśrama of Agastya.

(vi) Another mountain, Trikūṭ, very high, full of precious metals and numerous caves is also located there. Near this mountain gold and silver are found in profusion. It is inhabited by Rākṣasas.

(vii) On the eastern side of this dwīpa and on the sea coast is the Gokarna temple of Śaṅkara.

The clear pointers to the identification of this dwīpa are (i) sandalwood, (ii) gold, (iii) Agastya Āśrama and, (iv) Laṅkā and (v) Malaya Mt.

Agastya Ṛṣi is still said to reside at the Agastya-Kūṭa mountain in Tirunelveli (South India) where the river Tāmraparṇi takes its rise. It is the southernmost peak of the Ānamalai mountain. The hermitage of Agastya supposed to be situated at Kara in the Southern Ocean may be identified with Kolai on the mouth of the Tāmraparṇi (N. D. Dey, *Dict.*).

Gokarna has been identified with Gendia, a town in the province of North Kanara, Karwar District, 30 miles from Goa between Karwan and Kumta (N. L. Dey, *Dict.*). It is a celebrated place of pilgrimage (Mbt., Adi. P. Ch. 2, 19; Raghuvamśa, VIII; Śiva P. Bk. III, Ch. 15). It contains the temple of Mahādeo Mahābaleswara established by Rāvaṇa. Here Śankarācārya defeated in controversy Nīlakaṇṭa, a Śaiva (Śankaravijaya, Ch. 15). In (vii) above the location of Gokarna is given on the 'eastern side', actually it should be the 'western side'.

All the pointers mentioned above lead us to the conclusion the Malaya Dwīpa is actually the southernmost peninsula of India. The Malaya Dwīpa has been inserted here by the Purāṇas to emphasise the projection of Bhāratavarṣa southwards, far into the Indian Ocean, and to remind us that the Indian Peninsula is also one of the peninsulas of the Indian Ocean.

### 4. *Śaṅkha Dwīpa* (21, 32, 33)

(i) Its extent is 100 yojanas.

(ii) It is a territory containing many 'Ganas' (republics) of 'Malechhas'. Inhabited by many savage people.

(iii) Śaṅkhagiri mountain and Śaṅkhanāg river. Both are sacred. The mountain looks like a white shell and abounds in gems. On the banks of the river is the Āśrama of Śaṅkhamukh, the King of Snakes (Nāgas).

According to Arab geographers, the term Zangistan (from which Zangibar or Zanzibar, the Zang Coast is derived) covers the whole of the eastern coast of Africa known to the Muslims. 'Zang' is obviously equivalent to the Sanskrit 'Śaṅkha'. The Arabs probably borrowed this name from the Purāṇas.

Śaṅkha Dwīpa or (Zang) therefore represents the whole or a part of the eastern shore of Africa from Abyssinia to Madagascar. Ptolemy extended this coast as far south as Gardafui and to the south of it he placed another cape called Lingis or Singis extreme (or Śaṅkha).

Śaṅkha Dwīpa signifies 'the island of shells', and the natives of this coast, according to Strabo used to wear large collars of them, but according to some Purāṇas the inhabitants used to live in shells which signifies that they lived in caverns hollowed like a shell. The famous demon Śaṅcasūra lived in a shell and was killed by Kṛṣṇa. This Śaṅkhamukha Nāga, a giant in the form of a snake, with a mouth like a shell had two countenances, one of a man and another of a snake. The breath of this Nāga was fiery and poisonous which destroyed all vegetation and living beings up to a distance of 100 yojanas. This tradition became current in Arab legends and was kept alive for a long time. The breath of the Nāga evidently refers to the dreadful effect of Samoom or the hot venomous wind which blows from the mountains of Hubab through the whole extent of this region. 'Habab' in Arabic means the 'mountain of the serpent' and the people of these mountains, according to the Abyssinians, have legendary traditions of a snake who formerly reigned over them and conquered the kingdom of Sire. They are famous with their serpentine tribes in oriental tales which appear to have been derived from the Purāṇas.

The Purāṇas occasionally, the Arabs generally, and the Greeks invariably, made the mistake of joining the African Coast round the Indian Ocean to the East Indian Islands. Sumātrā and Malaya on Ptolemy's maps show the African Horn pulled far eastwards to the south of Sumātrā and Jāvā, thus enclosing the Indian Ocean in the south. In the beginnig of the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, the peninsula of Malaya and Sumātrā join the 'Island or Dwīpa of Śaṅkha' (or Zeng). Raneh of Arabian writers, which includes Madagascar and the surrounding islands, was also recognised by the Purāṇics who called it Hariṇa which is mentioned by the Bhāgawata Purāṇa along with Śaṅkha Dwīpa, in the south-western quarter of Jambū Dwīpa.

It is to be noted that the extent of the Śaṅkha Dwīpa is given in the Purāṇas as 100 yojanas only. This leads us to the conclusion that the Purāṇic Śaṅkha Dwīpa either stood for the island of Madagascar only or a portion of the adjoining African Coast or included both.

### 5. *Kuśa (or Kumud) Dwīpa*

The description of this dwīpa is very sketchy in the Purāṇas. One can understand the summary dismissal of Kuśa Dwīpa on the ground that Kuśa Dwīpa has been discussed by all the Purāṇas separately under the general heading of 'Seven Dwīpas' of the earth. If we refer to the earlier chapters of this monograph, we shall find Kuśa Dwīpa identified with Western Asia. Arabian Peninsula is a part of this dwīpa. Hence, while enumerating the peninsulas of the Indian Ocean, the Purāṇics just add Kuśa Dwīpa here to remind the readers of the peninsular form of this part of Kuśa Dwīpa.

### 6. *Varāha Dwīpa*

The characteristic features of this dwīpa are given as follows:

(i) Inhabited by numerous savage people.

(ii) Large number of prosperous cities.

(iii) Mountains, rivers and forests.

(iv) The Varāha mountain with gorges, waterfalls, and caves.

(v) The Varāhi river of clear and tasty water. It banks are regarded as holy.

(vi) Viṣṇu (in the form of 'Varāha') is the principal diety of this dwīpa.

Wilford[3] describes a division of the world into seven dwīpas, but he does not mention its source. According to this description the divisions are:

'Jambū is in the centre; to the west, reckoning from north to south are the dwīpas of Varāha, Kuśa and Śaṅkha; to the east reckoning from south to north are Malaya, Yama and Aṅga'.

Our identifications detailed above very closely fit in with the above alignment with respect to Aṅga, Yama, Malaya, Śaṅkha and Kuśa dwīpas mentioned by the Purāṇas in connection with the islands and peninsulas of the Indian Ocean. The only help we can get from Wilford's statement is that Varāha must be an island or peninsula in the west, i.e. in the Arabian sea, somewhere adjacent to the Śaṅkha Dwīpa which has been identified with Madagascar and the adjoining African Coast, and to the Kuśa Dwīpa of which a part is identical with the Arabian Peninsula.

Considering the characteristic features of the Varāha Dwīpa given in the Purāṇas and summarised above, one has to eliminate the dry and arid lands of Makran and the Persian Coast. The only area which can possibly, if not definitely, be identified with the Varāha Dwīpa, is the most perfect peninsula known as the African Horn which may be added in the Purāṇic list as Varāha Dwīpa. The only river Webbe Shibeli in the region represents the Varāhi river and the mountains of Arusi represent the Varāha Mt. of the Purāṇas. A large number of cities, forests and savage tribes can only be applicable to a portion of this peninsula of the Arabian Sea.

# CHAPTER XIII Cosmogony, Cosmology and Cosmography

IN the preceding chapters an attempt has been made to bring out as concisely as possible, the geographical content of the Purāṇas. We shall now discuss the genesis of a large part of the geographical ideas obtained in these works and their place in the general classification of learning.

We shall first discuss what the Purāṇas tell us about the earth in its large relations, both in time and space, to the remainder of the Universe, opinions about the Creation, about the size and shape of our terrestrial globe, about the influence exerted by the heavenly bodies in determining or affecting geographical conditions on its surface. In the Preface we explained why it is justifiable, when dealing with the Vedic and Purāṇic geography, to wander into the fields of cosmogony and cosmography far beyond what are now regarded as the rightful limits of geography. The following paragraphs will show how closely the Purāṇic conceptions of the present conditions of the Earth may be connected with their idea of the origin and nature of the Universe.

## *General Character of Purāṇic Cosmology*

In the Purāṇas the discussions on the difficult questions of cosmogony, cosmology and cosmography show keen and vivid thinking because they lie on the border between philosophy and theology. It appears at first that the Purāṇics were more interested in attempting to solve the insoluble mysteries of the Supreme Being and the Universe than they were in the world of Nature immediately surrounding them. The first sections of all the Purāṇas give an account of creation discussing all its aspects in full detail. During the period between the 5th and 13th centuries A.D., immense and weighty volumes were written as commentaries on the earlier account of Creation in the Sacred Books, in which complicated arguments were elaborated with the finesse of scholastic logic. In an age of faith, as the period under review was, the religious enthusiasm of the artisan-architect was transmuted into lofty and majestic temples while that of the theologian turned to the elucidation of the words of the Vedas. To analyse these words, to comment upon their minutest details, to reveal the meaning that presumably lay behind them, was not only a work of piety and devotion but an absorbing pastime for keen-witted thinkers. In the more concrete realism of natural science, this period is characterised by keen observation and creative thought but in matters of cosmogony and cosmography which were highly controversial and classical, opinions were either enthusiastically defended as casting light on the Vedas or else bitterly attacked as subversive of all truth. The Purāṇic concepts excel all previous and subsequent literature on these subjects.

The Purāṇas deal with many problems, pertaining to cosmology, cosmography and cosmogony. Some of these are abstruse and metaphysical —questions of the nature of the Supreme Being and the nature of time and space. With these we are not concerned. Others are more concrete—questions of the materials out of which the Universe was made and the manner in which it was made.

For the sake of clarity let us state some of these questions as follows:

(a) The question of whether matter existed prior to the creation of the world, that is to say, whether the Universe was fashioned out of a pre-existing substance or if it was made out of nothing.

(b) The question of the manner in which the Universe was fashioned after it had been created.

(c) The problem of whether the Brahmā' Day is an actual division of time or merely a hypothetical division of the process of Creation.

The answers to these problems as given in the Purāṇas are elucidations or elaborations of the Vedic ideas. In fact, the Vedic ideas permeated through the ages the cosmology and cosmogony of the Persian, Greek, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian and Islamic Sacred literature. The cosmogony of the Vedas, which has a strong bearing on the Purāṇic views may be summarised as follows:

(a) Artistic origin of the Universe;

(b) Mechanical origin;

(c) Instrumental origin; and

(d) Philosophical origin.

*Vedic Cosmology*

The Ṛgveda mentions a number of gods who performed various functions during the process of creation. These gods were the artists who contributed their skill to the construction and completion of the Universe. They wove various materials into a pattern,[1] and shaped the Universe by blasting and smelting.[2] The Universe was compared to a house and the

Ṛgveda alludes to various stages in the construction of this Universal house.[3] References to cosmic dust as the building material of the Universe occur in certain hymns of the Ṛgveda, i.e. RV (X 81) and (X 82) which are addressed to Viśwakarmā who is anterior to Earth, Heaven, Asuras, gods and other animate and inanimate objects.

> Through all this World strode Viṣṇu;
> thrice his foot he planted and the whole
> was gathered in his footstep dust. (RV. I-22, 17. Griffith's tr., p. 22)

and

> When ye, O gods, in yonder deep close-clasping
> one another stood
>
> Thence, as of dancers, from your meet
> a thickening cloud of dust arose. (RV. X 72, 6. Griffith's tr., p. 486-7).

The views regarding the mechanical origin of the Universe developed in the last phase of the Ṛgvedic period. It suggests the sacrifice (or disintegration) of the primeval body known as Ādi-Puruṣa who is conceived as the soul and nucleus of the Universe and an embodiment of the Supreme Spirit. The Earth, the Sky, the Wind, the Moon and the Sun, and all terrestrial elements were the results of the dismemberment of the Puruṣa—as a part of sacrificial ceremony.

The philosophical theory of cosmogony has its origin in the Song of Creation (RV. X 129, 1-4) which says that in the beginning there was neither being (*Sat*) nor not-being (*Asat*). There was no atmosphere, no sky, no days and no nights. The space was empty but for a Unit which was born by its own nature perhaps due to its inherent heat. This heat has been explained by Wilson as austerities, but it may conveniently be considered as a physical action in the process of formation of the Universe.

Desire was the next element which grew within the Unit. This caused the growth of further elements of the Universe and led to its gradual perfection. The Upaniṣads further elaborate this and they hold that Death concealed everything in the beginning. Death being the first existent desired to have a body and as a result of worshipping,[4] water was produced. The froth of water hardened and formed the crust of the Earth on which Death toiled and produced fire and light. Afterwards Āditya '(Sun) and Vāyu (Air) were produced from the same body (Death). Thus:

> In the beginning there was the non-existent. It became existent and then grew. It turned into an egg (*andā*). The egg, after lying quiescent for one year, broke into two halves, one of silver and the other of gold. The former became the earth and the latter the heaven, the thick membrane turned into mountains, the thin into clouds, the small veins became rivers and the fluid became the sea. (Chānd. Up., VI. 32-3).

The instrumental origin of the Universe is based on the occurrence of parent bodies from which the Universe was created. Agni (Fire)[5], Indra and Soma[6], Sūrya (Sun)[7], Indra[8], Rudra[9], and the other gods are mentioned as having been instrumental in the creation of the earth and the heaven—the twin parents of the whole Universe. The union of the earth and the heaven results in the birth of the sun, which is the most important agent in the creation of the world. 'He is the soul of all that moveth or not-moveth, the Sun hath filled the air and earth and heaven' (RV. I.115, 1. Griffith's). He is later identified with Prajāpati, Viśwakarmā and sometimes with the Golden Egg and the Unborn Being.

The Unborn Being is also named as 'Ātman' (soul)[10] who produced the Universe through an intermediary body. 'Ātman' first of all desired to create 'worlds' which he did by creating super-celestial regions of waters, the heaven with its celestial light, the moral earth and the subterranean region of waters. The waters encompass the heaven and the earth and their outer surfaces. The Ātman then produced the Universal Person for further creation and deities to govern the functions of the cosmos. He established hunger and thirst in the Universe and created Matter.

The central idea of various cosmogonic theories of the Vedic and post-Vedic period appears to be (1) the existence of waters in the beginning and (2) the creation of a cosmic nucleus—Prajāpati (RV. X 121, 7)—the maker of the Universe. This nucleus is often named as Hiraṇyagarbha (or Golden Egg) which is considered as the source of the existence of all mundane and heavenly entities because it contained fire (heat) within itself. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa gives more details of cosmogony on the same lines. It says, 'Prajāpati desired, "May I be propagated? May I be multiplied?" He exhibited fervour and created the worlds, the earth, the atmosphere, the sky; He brooded over the worlds; from these worlds, when brooded over, Agni (fire) was born from the earth, Vāyu (air) from the atmosphere, Āditya (sun) from the sky. He brooded over these luminaries. From these that were brooded over, the Vedas were born, the Ṛgveda from Agni, the Yajurveda from Vāyu, the Sāmaveda from Āditya....'[11] The Kauśītaki Brāhmaṇa goes a step forward. It explains the production of heat by saying that Prajāpati by undergoing penance was heated and there arose Agni (fire), Vāyu (Air), Āditya (Sun), Candramā (Moon) and Ūṣā (Dawn). Each of these was ordered by their progenitor to practice penance to effect the propagation of Prajāpati.[12]

Not only the Purāṇas but also the basic concepts of cosmology in different parts of the old world conform to the general pattern laid down by the Vedic writers. The Vedic ideas persisted for thousands of years and with local or regional variations are traceable not only in the scriptures of the great religions of the world but also in the legends and mythology and philosophical thought of civilized nations which have found a place in world history.

*Jewish, Christian and Muslim Cosmogony*

The opening chapter of the Old Testament called 'Genesis' describes in brief outline the processes of Creation, as conceived by Moses, and forms the basis of the cosmological ideas of the Jews, Christians and Muslims:

> In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and the darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day and God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the Waters and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth: and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was so....
>
> On the third day God created 'grass and herbs yielding seed and the fruit trees yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth'. On the fourth day, He created the 'two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also'. On the fifth day, living creatures–birds and fishes and reptiles were created and on the sixth day He created animals including man.[13]

The ideas contained in the Genesis clearly fall under one or more of the theories of cosmogony enunciated in Vedic literature. The work of the first day was the creation of the Universe from *nothing material;* out of which earth and heaven, fire and water and life were to be evolved. It is interpreted that the *material* was the *hyle* or chaos of the ancient philosophers and the words 'heaven' and 'earth' referred to 'chaos'. The word 'earth' in the dictum 'The earth was without form and void' referred to the primordial mixture of land and water, a mingling of land that was not solid and of water that was not liquid. Air and fire at that time were of about the density of water. Similar explanations are applicable to various Vedic materialistic theories.

The Koran as mentioned above repeats the words of Moses and casually mentions that the process of creation is a manifestation of the Desire of the Supreme Being.

> Lo! your Lord is Allāh who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He established Himself upon the Throne directing all things. There is no intercessor (with Him) save His permission (Al-Koran, X, 4).
>
> And He it is who created the heavens and the earth in six days—and His Throne was upon the Water—that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct (Al-Koran, XI. 7).
>
> Allāh it is who raised the Heavens without visible support, then mounted the throne, and compelled the Sun and the Moon to be of service, each runneth unto an appointed time....
>
> Say (O! Mohamed, unto the idolators): Do you really disbelieve in Him who created the earth in two days, and ascribe to Him rivals? He (and none else) is the Lord of the Worlds. He placed therein hills rising from it, and blessed it and measured therein its sustenance in four days, alike for (all) who ask. Then turned He to the heaven when it was smoke, and said unto it and unto the earth: come both of you, willingly or loath. They said: 'We come, obedient.'
>
> Then He ordained them Seven heavens in two Days and inspired in each heaven its mandate; and we decked the nether heaven with lamps, and rendered it inviolable. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knower (Al-Koran, XLI, 9-12).

The 'Day' in the above context is defined by the Koran as one of thousand years:

> He directeth the ordinance from the heaven unto the earth: then it ascendeth unto Him in a day, whereof the measure is a thousand years, of that ye reckon.

With the aid of the above and other quotations from the Koran it is possible to assert, with equal force, either the absolute transcendence over, or the complete immanence, of Allāh in His creation. The first doctrine was developed by scholastic theologians, the second by some extreme Sūfī extremists.

### *Buddhist Concepts*

Buddhism believes that the world goes through periods of evolution and decline—which is one of the fundamental ideas in Vedic cosmogony. It does not reject the existence of the gods but it denies that they had any significant effect upon the cosmic process—in fact, according to Buddhists, the world came into being through the operation of natural laws. The following passage is attributed to the Buddha himself (from Dīgha Nikāya. 3.28).

> There comes a time, my friends, sooner or later,... when the world is dissolved and beings are mostly reborn in the world of Radiance (*Abhassara*). There they dwell, made of the stuff of mind, feeding on joy, shining in their own light, flying through middle space, firm in their bliss for a long, long time.
>
> Now there comes a time when this world begins to evolve, and then the world of Brahmā (which is below *Abhassara,* the third Buddhist heaven) appears, but it is empty. And some being, whether because his alloted span is passed or because his merit is exhausted, quits his body in the world of Radiance and is born in the empty world of Brahmā, where he dwells for a long time. Now because he has been so long alone he begins to feel dissatisfaction and longing, and wishes that other beings might come and live with him. And indeed soon other beings quit their bodies in the world of Radiance and come to keep him company in the world of Brahmā.

### *The Purāṇic Concepts*

The Purāṇas are evidently based on the Vedas but they derive mostly from the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata—which represent the mytho-heroic stage of Hindū belief. Since the Purāṇas belong to a much later stage, they naturally present important modifications in the progress of opinion. They expand and systematise the theoretical cosmogony of the later epics. As the ultimate source is the same, it will be seen that their theories regarding cosmology, cosmogony and cosmography present striking similarities in fundamentals with those which prevailed in western Asia and the Mediterranean lands.

The first part (or Lakṣaṇa) of all the Purāṇas deals mainly with the details of Creation—primary (*Sarga*) and secondary (*Prati-Sarga*). The first explains how the Universe proceeds from Prakṛti (or eternal crude matter); the second, in what manner the forms of things are developed from the elementary substances previously evolved, or how they reappear after their temporary destruction. Both these creations are periodical, but the termination of the first occurs only at the end of the life of Brahmā when not only all other forms are annihilated, but the elements are again merged into primary substance, besides which only the Spritual Being exists: the latter takes place at the end of every Kalpa or the Day of Brahmā, and affects only the forms of inferior creatures, and lower worlds, leaving the substance of the Universe entire and sages and gods unaffected. Thus the Purāṇic cosmogony is based on the two basic principles: viz.,

(a) infinite and eternal revolutions of the Universe and (b) the co-eternity of Spirit (Puruṣa) and matter (Pradhāna).

### *Primary Creation*

In the beginning, the Purāṇas quoting from the Vedas, assert 'there was then neither day nor night, nor sky nor earth, nor darkness nor light, nor any other thing, save only one, unapprehensible by intellect, or that which is Brahmā and Puruṣa (Spirit) and Pradhāna (Matter). The two forms which are other than the essence of unmodified Viṣṇu are Pradhāna and Puruṣa; and his other form by which those two are connected or separated, is called Kāla (time). Where discrete substance is aggregated in crude matter, as in a foregone dissolution, that dissolution is termed elemental (*Prakṛta*)....' (Viṣṇu P., Wilson, tr., Bk II, p. 12).

### *Cosmic Nucleus*

We pass over the philosophical discussion regarding the equilibrium of qualities and their development at the time of creation; how the elements in successive order acquired the property of causality to one another and how each element was invested by its own rudiment (*āvaraṇa*) or each rudiment of its preceding gross and rudimental elements. We consider the stage when,

> Ether, air, light, water and earth severally united with properties of sound and the rest, existed as distinguishable according to their qualities, as soothing, terriffic or stupefying; but possessing various energies, and being unconnected, they could not, without combination, create living things, not having blended with each other. Having combined, therefore, with one another, they assumed through their association, the character of one mass of entire unity; and from the direction of spirit, with the acquiescence of the indiscrete principle (*Avyaktānu-grahenda*) intellect and the rest, to the gross elements inclusive, formed an egg which gradually expanded like a bubble of water. This vast egg, O sage, compounded of the elements, and resting on the waters was the excellent natural abode of Viṣṇu in the form of Brahmā....
>
> In the egg, O Brahmā, were the continents and seas and mountains, the planets and divisions of the Universe, the gods, the demons and mankind. And this egg was externally invested by seven natural envelopes, i.e. water, air, fire, ether and *Ahaṁkāra*, the origin of elements, each tenfold the extent of that which is invested; next came the principle of intelligence; and finally, He who was surrounded by the indiscrete Principle; resembling thus the coconut, filled interiorly with pulp and exteriorly covered by husk and rind (Viṣṇu P., II, Wilson, tr., p. 18-19).

A similar account of the first aggregation of the elements in the form of an egg is given in all the Purāṇas with the usual epithet Haima or Hiraṇya (golden). The symbolic representation of the nucleus from which the Universe was created and which undoubtedly has its origin in the Vedas was adopted by many nations. Traces of it occur amongst the Syrians, the Persians, the Egyptians and the Greeks. The idea of the Orphic Egg amongst the Greeks and that described by Aristophanes as well as the consecration of an egg as a part of the ceremony in the Dionysiaca and other mystics show how far the concept of a nucleus from which the Universe grew was embedded in the philosophy of ancient nations. If we interpret the epithet Haima or Hiraṇya (golden) as 'bright and reddish yellow' and the word 'water' as 'water-vapour', i.e., in its gaseous state we can see in the description of the Golden Egg the origin of the idea of a 'hot, incandescent nebula' which is the starting point of modern cosmological theories.

The earliest cosmogony or theory of the Universe in which the laws of gravitation found a place was that of Kant, the Prussian philosopher (1755). He assumed that the collision of the hard particles of the primordial matter (conceived as supernaturally created) generated heat and rotation as they fell in upon one another under their mutual gravitational attraction. Thus, the original cold motionless cloud of matter became in due course a vast hot nebula, spinning so rapidly that rings of matter were successively thrown off its equator by centrifugal action, while the residual central mass remained as the Sun. Each ring was supposed to have condensed as a planet, which by a small-scale repetition of the same process threw off satellites; ultimately in this way the complete solar system came into being. Kant's hypothesis is dynamically unsound but our interest in the theory lies in the fact that on the one hand it follows the pattern of Purāṇic cosmogony, i.e., the creation of the Egg or nucleus or Brahmā (or according to Kant, the existence of the original cold and motionless cloud and its transformation into a hot rotating nebula), during the process of universal creation, while on the other it is the forerunner of the very similar and justly famous nebular hypothesis of Laplace (1796) on which modern speculations on cosmogony are based.

Similarly, the idea of cosmic cycles, i.e., the incidental dissolution of the world at the end of definite periods (*Kalpas* of the Purāṇas) and its recreation thereafter was firmly established among the Chaldeans, the Ionians, the Greeks and the Pythagoreans from which Plato adopted it. Although the principle was accepted in essence many and various opinions prevailed about the period covered by each cycle, and about the violence and character of the changes produced by the Sun. The Stoics adopted it in its most extreme form involving successive liquefactions of the Universe. The Chaldeans thought that whenever all the planets come into conjunction on one straight line in the sign of the zodiac Cancer, the entire universe is destroyed by fire, but destroyed to be born again; similarly the world is destroyed by water when the same phenomenon occurs in Capricorn. The theory of a complete and universal birth and rebirth (paliogenesis) was held by some of the Greek philosophers. Plato and Aristotle, however, seem to have restricted the destructive effects of the celestial influence to the sub-lunar sphere and maintained that the realm above the Moon (i.e., Mahāloka of the Purāṇas or the worlds of gods who live in the upper two spheres) were eternal. On the whole, the belief in periodically recurrent destructions of the earth by water (one of which is mentioned in the old Testament and in the Al-Koran) was more widespread and was given greater definition than belief in corresponding destruction by fire. The main reason for this may be attributed to rudimentary geological observations (notably of the presence of shells on high ground) which showed that portions of the earth's surface had at one time lain beneath the waters.

### *Cosmic Cycles of the Purāṇas*

The Purāṇas deal with the concept of the cosmic cycles at great length since it is the cornerstone of their cosmographical and cosmological theories. In fact, their whole philosophy revolves round the three main principles of existence, i.e., creation, preservation and dissolution.

> At the end of this day (of Brahmā) a dissolution of the universe occurs, when all the three worlds, earth and the regions of space, are consumed by fire...when the three worlds are but one mighty ocean[14] Brahmā, who is one with Nārāyaṇa, satiate with the demolition of the universe; Sleeps...for a night of equal duration with his day; at the close of which he creates anew. Of such days and nights is a year of Brahmā composed; and a hundred such years constitute his whole life. One Parārddha, or half his existence, has expired, terminating with the Mahā-Kalpa called Padma. The Kalpa (or day of Brahmā) termed Variha is the first of the second period of Brahmā's existence (Viṣṇu. P., III, Wilson's tr., p. 25).

The Purāṇas mention three kinds of dissolution: (1) incidental (2) elemental and (3) absolute. The incidental is that which relates to Brahmā and occurs at the end of each Kalpa. A Kalpa calculated according to the Purāṇic texts is equal to 4,320 million years. The elemental is that which takes place after two Parārddha. A Parārddha is represented by $10^{18}$ years (Viṣṇu P.) or $10^{15}$ years (Vāyu P.). The absolute is final liberation from existence. We are here concerned with the incidental dissolution only.

The details regarding the processes involved in incidental dissolution, as will be seen later, are precise and instructive.

> At the end of a thousand periods of four ages (i.e., a day of Brahmā) the earth is for the most part exhausted. A total death then ensues which lasts a hundred years and in consequence of the failure of food, all beings become languid and exanimate and at last entirely perish. The external Viṣṇu. . .enters into the seven rays of the Sun, drinks up all the waters of the globe, and causes all moisture whatever, in living bodies or in the soil, to evaporate; thus drying up the whole earth. . . (Viṣṇu P., 6, III; Wilson, tr., p. 632).

The intensity of the sun's rays then increases three times and the three worlds including Pātāla are set on fire. The flames then reach the higher regions, i.e. the atmosphere and those above it. When all is consumed, heavy and massy clouds appear. These deliver torrents of water and quench the dreadful fires which involve the three worlds. The rains continue uninterruptedly for a hundred years and deluge the whole world.

Thus the sequence of events during the period of incidental dissolution are (a) desiccation (b) destruction (by fire) and (c) deluge. After which the process of creation is repeated and marks the beginning of the next Kalpa.

### *Secondary Creation*

The Purāṇas do not stop at the origin of the earth and the extra-territorial spheres but also establish the order and describe the manner in which 'the Diety created the gods, sages, progenitors, demons, men, animals, trees and the rest that abide on earth; in heaven, or in the waters.'[15] After the creation of *Mahat, Tanmātras* and *Aindriyaka* (i.e., intellect, rudimental principles of senses) He created the inanimate bodies; then the animals (including birds) followed by divinities. The seventh creation was that of the Arvaksrotas, i.e. that of man. The inanimate bodies include the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, i.e., (a) trees, (b) shrubs, (c) climbing plants (d) creepers and (e) grasses.

### *Modern Views Regarding the Geological History of the Earth*

It would be interesting to compare the Purāṇic concept of cosmic cycles and evolution of life with what is now believed to be the probable history of the earth since it was born. Modern geology, on the basis of uranium-lead ratios, deduces that the approximate age of the earth is about 2,000 million years, and during this period of 2,000 million years th face of the earth has been changing constantly. The primeval granitic crust of the earth was eroded by denuding agents like water, wind, running water, etc., and sediments were laid down in the primeval oceans. This extensive period of sedimentation was evidently followed by the revolutionary crumbling of the earth's crust known as the Laurentian revolution during which large masses of molten granite were poured over these layers while the layers themselves were uplifted and folded into gigantic mountains. It must, however, be noted that this revolution need not have been the first one to take place on the surface of the earth. In fact, there probably were several earlier outbursts of tectonic activity of which we have no record.

After the erosion of the first 'recorded' mountain chains, large areas of the continents were again covered by water, and thick layers of new deposits were formed on top of the previous ones. Then another revolution (the Algonkian) ensued, accompanied by new mountain formation processes and new intrusions of granite lavas, again followed by a long quiet sedimentation period. Then again a revolution, again a period of transgressional seas and another sedimentation.

After the fifth 'recorded' revolution, known as the charnian (date uncertain), the history of the evolution of the earth's surface is rather complete, since the sediments begin to contain fossils of different primitive animals in steadily increasing numbers. As before, the uplifted continents slowly began to sink back into the plastic mass below and the incessant pouring of rain washed away the rocky material of the mountains and high plateaus. Ocean water crept inland and covered large areas over the continents. This extensive inundation was the most characteristic feature of the Early Palaeozoic chapter of the earth's history and lasted for about 160 million years. Meanwhile the stresses in the earth's crust were slowly gathering their forces for the major outbreak that finally took place in the year 280,000,000 B.C.

The great disturbances of the earth's crust that opened the next, the Late Palaeozoic, chapter of the earth's history are known as the Caledonian revolution. The processes repeat themselves and similar revolutions occur in the ages which followed it. The Appalachian or Hercynian revolution took place in about 150,000,000 B.C. while the Alpine-Himālayan revolution occurred in about 40,000,000 B.C.

The earth's history is thus punctuated by (a) revolutions or periods of intense tectonic activity, (b) widespread transgression of seas and (c) destruction and revival of new forms of life after each revolution.

It would appear from the above that there is a fair degree of similarity between the Purāṇic concept of cosmic cycles and the geological revolutions. If we identify a Kalpa or Brahmā's Day with the inter-revolutionary period and the 'revolution' with the 'incidental dissolution' of the Purāṇas and the transgression of seas with the 'Great Floods' or immersion of the earth in an envelope of water as conceived by the Purāṇics, the two accounts tally fairly accurately except in point of time. The Brahmā's Day or Kalpa is given as 4,320,000,000 years while the later inter-revolutionary periods do not extend beyond 100-150 million years and are not of equal duration. It is evident that the Purāṇic ideas were based on insight, logical deductions, superficial observation or even speculation and not on a scientific study of the geological processes. But one must say that the Purāṇic ideas represent a fairly accurate speculation, or logical deduction.

# NOTES AND REFERENCES

## INTRODUCTION

[1] *'Prāṇaṁ pañca lakṣaṇaṁ'*, *Amarakośa.*

[2] The definition of a Purāṇa as found in the Viṣṇu, Matsya, Vāyu and other Purāṇas is as follows: *'Sargaśca pratisargaśca vaṁśomanvantarāṇi ca; sarveṣvetasu kathyante vaṁśānucaritaṁ ca yat* (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* III, 6, 25).

[3] *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* III, 6.

[4] The list of the 18 Purāṇas called the mahā-purāṇas as given in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (III, Ch. 6), is as follows: Brahma, Padma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Bhāgavata, Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Agni, Bhaviṣya, Brahma Vaivarta, Liṅga, Varāha, Skanda, Vāmana, Kūrma, Matsya, Garuḍa and Brahmāṇḍa. This order does not hold good insofar as the lists in other Purāṇas are concerned.

[5] For an analysis of the Agni Purāṇa, see *JASB*, March, 1832.

[6] Refer to Noah and the Great Flood of the Bible and the Koran.

[7] This account also occurs in the Mahābhārata in a simpler form.

[8] *Asiatic Researches,* Vol. VIII, p. 252.

[9] Details of these countries are given in chapters on regional geography which follow.

[10] R. C. Hazra, *Studies in the Purāṇic Records of Hindu Rites and Customs* (Dacca, 1940).

[11] P. C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India* (Varanasi, 1960).

## CHAPTER I

[1] Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Saraswatī, Śutudrī, Paruṣṇī, Ansiknī, Murudvṛdhā, Vitastā, Ārjikeyā, Suṣomā, Sindhu, Triṣṭāmā, Susartu, Rasā, Swetyā, Kubhā, Gomatī, Kramu, Mehatnū, Sarayū. Dṛsadwatī appears once only with Saraswatī (3, 23, 4). Gaṅgā and Yamunā are also mentioned only once in Ṛgveda.

[2] The only important plant mentioned in the Ṛgveda is the *śoma* (which is repeatedly mentioned). The whole of the ninth maṇḍala of Ṛgveda speaks highly of this plant and its utility in Āryan life. Other plants which have been mentioned in it are Aśvatha (pipal) (1, 135, 8, 10, 97, 5), Kiṁśuka (*patacha* or *parṇa*) (10, 85, 20); Khadira (3, 53, 19), Śamī (10, 31, 10), Śālmali (Semal) (7, 50, 3), Kumuda (lotus, repeatedly mentioned), Kiyambhu (10, 16, 13), Kuśa (grass), Dūrvā (grass), (10, 134, 5, 142, 8), Śara (Muñja, grass) (1, 191, 3) and Ulāpa (10, 142, 3).

[3] Pandit D. P. Misra's suggestion that Paṇis were Phoenicians is interesting. They were traders and had probably established colonies in India in ancient times.

[4] Cf. N. Das's 'Geography of Asia based on the Rāmāyan' and Pargiter, 'Geography of Rama's Exile', *JRAS,* 1894, 231 ff, which deals with this subject.

[5] Calcutta, Bombay and Kumbhakonam. Now its critical edition (published from Poona) is also available.

[6] Of C. V. Vaidya, *The Riddle of the Ramayana* (London, 1906), maps facing Preface, pp. iii & iv.

### CHAPTER II

[1] On the number 'seven', see also *'Christomathie arable'* of M. de Sacy, Vol. II, p. 250.

[2] Book 1, Ch. XXII.

[3] *Nat. Hist. of Pliny,* Bk. VI, last chapter.

[4] M. Reinaud, *Geographie a' Aboulfeda,* Vol. II (Paris, 1848), p. 11.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. 9.

[6] *Zend Avesta,* Vol. I, Pt. 2, p. xxx; Vol. II, pp. 357, 363, 409 (Bombay edn.).

[7] Masūdī adds in *Kitāb-al-Tanbīh* that the name of Khommneretz was also used by the Chaldeans and Assyrians. This name is written by him as *Khanrath* and elsewhere as *Khibuth.*

[8] M. Reinaud and Langles, *'Relations des voyages des Arabes et des Persans dans l'Inde et a la Chine'* (Paris, 1845), Vol. I, p. 81.

[9] Masūdī, *Muruj al-Dhhāb'* (Ed. Barbier de Meynard, Paris, 1861-77), Vol. I, p. 70.

[10] *Foe-kou-ki,* p. 82.

[11] This is discussed in the next chapter.

[12] W. E. Clarke, *Sakadwipa and Swetadwipa',* *JAOS,* Vol. 39, 1919, pp. 209-42.

[13] So named in the Mahābhārata (6, 6, 13) and by unanimous Purāṇic tradition which in spite of the development of an enlarged theoretical geography kept this older concept as the basis for the description of Jambū Dwipa.

[14] For the four oceans, see Hopkins, *JAOS,* 1910, p. 371, and *Epic Mythology,* p. 122. Compare Harivaṁśa, 220 (2, 370), 70 (1, 303), where four oceans are referred to along with four castes, four ages and *'quatres holocausts'* 44 (1.205). Varuṇa is described as surrounded by the four oceans.

[15] See 143 (2.88); 148 (2.115); 149 (2.120).

[16] Seven dwipas, 4 (1.26); 33 (1.154-5, 157), 149 (2.120), 188 (2.115); 'Seven Dwipas and Seven Seas', 30 (1.136). Are the seven dwipas and seven seas of the Harivaṁśa merely conventional, or is the Purāṇic geography implied? For the conventional use of 'seven' in the Mahābhārata, see Hopkins, *JAOS,* 1910, pp. 378-81.

[17] See Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism,* pp. 3, 4, 12 and *Legends and Theories of the Buddhists,* pp. 80 (especially p. 85).

[18] Translated by Burgess and Whitney, *JAOS,* 6.390.

[19] *Indian Antiquary,* 30, 243-4.

[20] Colebrook, *Essays,* II, p. 200, notes that Videha is divided into two

parts, eastern and western (Pūrva and Apara). Compare with this the Pūrvavideha of the Buddhists and see Weber, *IA*, 30, 243. The name of the northernmost region (Airāvata) agrees with the name of the northernmost region of Mahābhārata (6.6. 37-9).

[21] Taittirīya Āranyaka names a mountain Sudarśana (1.31.2). The Rāmāyaṇa (4.40.61) mentions, a Sudarśanadwīpa, and (4.43.16) locates a mountain Sudarśana in the north.

[22] For reference to 'many dwipas', see Hopkins, *JAOS*, 1910, pp. 370-2. The number 'seven' is not to be taken too literally—cf. 1.75.19: Purūravas 'had sway over thirteen dwīpas of the sea'; 3.3.52: 'The whole earth with her thirteen dwīpas'; 3.134.20: 'Thirteen dwīpas exist on earth'; 7.70.15 refers to eighteen dwīpas; 12.14.25: After the statement that the king had conquered Bhadrāśva, Ketumāla, Bhārata and Uttarakuru it is said that he penetrated the ocean and ruled the populous dwīpas and antardwīpas. It seems clear that these passages describe the whole earth and reveal no knowledge of concentric dwīpas.

[23] Although six mountains are enumerated in Kuśa and in Krauñca.

[24] Vāyu, 44.4; Mārkaṇḍeya (55.10) describes a Mt. Kṛṣṇa in the west in Ketumāla. Mārkaṇḍeya (55.10) describes a Mt. Kṛṣṇa west of Meru.

[25] Probably Sumātrā. At any rate it corresponds to the later Suvarṇabhūmi.

[26] Harivaṁśa, 220 (2, 370), gives this as the name of a mountain in the east. In Vāyu, 33, 32-3, it is the name of a district in Plakṣadwīpa, in Viṣṇu, 2-2-26, and Bhāgavata, 5.16.27, the name of a mountain near Mt. Meru, in Varāha (p. 331,1.7), the name of a prince of Śakadwīpa.

[27] Compare the Red Sea named Lohitya in Harivaṁśa, 231 (2.401), mentioned in connection with the milk ocean and Mt. Udaya in the east. Compare also the Jaina Aruṇadwīpa and the Aruṇodaya (red) sea. Viṣṇu, 2.2.24, locates a lake named Aruṇoda in the east in Bhadrāśva. Cf. Lohitya (in the east in the Bṛhatsaṁhitā, 14.6).

[28] Nowhere is the name Ṛṣabha connected with Śākadwīpa and the milk ocean, but Mbh. 5, 112.22 and 5, 113.1 locate a Mt. Ṛṣabha in the east (5, 112-1-2), across the ocean. In Mbh. and the Purāṇas it is the name of a mountain in India and of a mountain north of Meru; cf. Wilson, *The Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, 2.117.141 note. Vāyu, 49.11, locates Mt. Ṛṣabha in Plakṣadwīpa; Rāmāyaṇa, 4.41.40, and Harivaṁśa, 220 (2.371), locate it in the south. In Kathāsaritsāgara, 54.16, Vṛṣabha is the name of a mountain in Narikeladwīpa located by the Bṛhatsaṁhitā in the south-east).

[29] Bhāskara (in passage quoted above); Vāyu, 47.76, locate it in the south; Mbh. 12.347.59 in the north-east.

[30] By a curious coincidence the medieval traveller Marginolli (Yule Cordier, Cathay and the Way Thither, 3, 231), who voyaged from China to India, describes a sea which 'blazed like fire, as if in flames, and fire-spitting dragons flying by'.

[31] Mahābhārata, 6, 12.9, describes a mountain in Kuśadwīpa as abounding in corals.

[32] For this whole passage see Hardy, *Manual of Buddhism*, p. 13.

[33] There are two peninsulas of Asia which resemble the ears of a hare. They are Kamchatka (in the N.E.) and Malay Peninsula (in the S.E.). The former may be the Kāśyapadwīpa and the latter, the Nāgadwīpa of the Mahābhārata (see also Chapter XII).

[34] Do-ab (Persian)=dwīpa (Sanskrit)=jezira (Arabic).

[35] V. Kennedy, *Researches into the Nature and Affinity of Ancient and Hindu Mythology*, p. 407; Barth, *The Religions of India*, pp. 431-2; E. W. Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, *JAOS*, 1910, pp. 369-72; Charpentier, *Journal Asiatique*, 1910, Vol. II, p. 605; Frazer, *A Literary History of India*, pp. 231-3; R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 5-7, 32ff (Strassburg, 1913); Howell, *The Soul of India*, pp. 533-4, 546; Lanfer, *American Anthropologist*, 1916, pp. 572-3.

[36] W. F. Warren, 'Śākadwīpa in the Mythical World-View of India', *JAOS*, 1920, Vol. 40, pp. 356-8.

[37] Col. Gerini, *Researches on Pltolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia* (1909), p. 725.

[38] F. Wilford, *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VIII, p. 267-346.

[39] V. V. Iyer, 'The Seven Dwipas of the Puranas', *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythical Society* (London), Vol. 15, No. 1. p. 62, No. 2, pp. 119-127; No. 3, pp. 238-45; Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 273-82; Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 30-45; No. 2, pp.94-105.

[40] See Chapter XII.

[41] *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VIII, p. 300.

[42] *Q.J. of Mythical Soc.*, Vol. 15, p. 62-75.

[43] See Chapter V on 'The Northern Regions of Jambū Dwīpa'.

[44] *Matsya Purāṇa*, 123, 12.

[45] *Ibid.*, 123, 13.

[46] Fujiyama means literally 'The Peerless Peak.' It is regarded as the 'Heavens' by the Japanese.

[47] See Chapter XII.

[48] Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (58, 23) mentions a Krauñca Dwīpa in Southern India and so does Bṛhat Saṁhitā (14, 13). It appears that there were two Krauñca mountains.

[49] *Matsya Purāṇa* (122, 89).

[50] *Vāyu Purāṇa* (49, 68, 69).

[51] *Matsya Purāṇa* (122, 79).

[52] Because, uninhabited regions, as mentioned earlier, do not find a place in the Purāṇic scheme of dwīpas.

[53] V. V. Iyer's thesis in which he has tried to identify Krauñca Dwīpa with Asia Minor is quite interesting (see his 'The Seven Dwipas of the Purāṇas', *Q.J. of Mythical Soc.*, Vol. 15, pp. 119-127).

## CHAPTER III

[1] *Zend Avestā*, Vol. II, p. 357, and *Shāhnāmah*, I, 81.

[2] *Fou-Kou-ki*.

[3] *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (Wilson's Tr.), p. 106-08.

[4] Adapted from S. G. Burrard, and H. H. Hayden, A *Sketch of the Geography and Geology of the Himalayan Mountains and Tibet* (1906).

[5] L. W. Lyde, *The Continent of Asia* (Macmillan), 1938, p. 74.

[6] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 41, 48-65.

[7] Probably the Purāṇas mean 'a defile.'

[8] T. H. Holdich, *The Gates of India* (London, 1910), p. 438.

[9] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 41, 1-47.

[10] *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (Wilson's Tr.), II, Ch. 1, p. 171.

[11] See Chapter VII.

## CHAPTER IV

[1] Sītā=Yarkand-Tarim-Hwang Ho; Chakṣu=Oxus; Bhadrasomā=Syr-Daria; Gaṅgā=Ganges. The Lakes are Karakul, Manasarovar, Victoria and Son Kul respectively.

[2] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 42 (1-81); *Matsya Purāṇa,* Ch. 113, 46.

[3] See *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Chapters 43, 44, 45 and 46 respectively.

[4] Chapters V to X.

[5] It is to be noted that Bhīṣmaparva of the Mahābhārata gives a list of 162 rivers of Bhārata.

[6] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 43.

[7] *Exploration in Tibet* (Calcutta University Publication, 1950), Ch. 1, Part III.

[8] *Annual Report of the Board of Scientific Advice for India,* 1904-05.

[9] Burrard, *ibid.,* p. 10.

[10] The names Chakṣu and Sītā are usually applied by the Purāṇas to the Oxus and the Yārkaṇḍ (Tārim) rivers as would appear in the next paragraph but they mean here the Indus and the Sutlej (Sītā-Dru).

[11] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 47.

[12] The name Soma-Tsangpo is still retained by a river which rises in Nychenthangla and flows towards north.

[13] Chapter VI.

[14] P. Luknitsky, *Soviet Tajikistan* (Moscow, 1954), p. 131.

## CHAPTER V

[1] *Vāyu Purāṇa,* Ch. 43, 1-38.

[2] *Ibid.,* Ch. 44, 1-24.

[3] The Zarafshan range was the traditional boundary between Sogdiana and Bactria in ancient and medieval times.

[4] The Śveta or Turkestan Range even today marks the boundary between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

[5] These ranges form the boundary between Kirghiztan and Kazakhistan.

[6] *Matsya Purāṇa,* 113, 61.

[7] *Ibid.,* 113, 31.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Omitted in the Bombay edition.

[10] In the Bombay edition the course of the river is given as:
From Śankhakūṭa-to-Vṛṣabha-Vatsa-Nīla, Kapiñjala-Indra Nīla-Mahā-Nīla-Hemaśṛṅga-Śvet-Sunāga-Satśṛṅga-Puṣkara-Dvirāja-Varāha-Mayūra-Jārudhi (having only one summit)-Tṛśṛṅga-Virudh.

[11] Quoted from the *Vāyu Purāṇa* (Bombay edn.), Ch. 45.

[15] V. Vitkovich, *A Tour of Soviet Uzbekistan* (Moscow, 1954), p. 115.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[14] Luknitsky, *op. cit.*

[15] Known as Afrosiab or Marcanda.

[16] Or the 'Yenisei' scrap —cf. L. W. Lyde, *The Continent of Asia* (Macmillan, 193), p. 203). The Uttarakuru region may be equated with the 'Tobol-Yenisei Lowland.'

[17] The land of the Khalluq and Toghazghuz according to the Arab and Persian writers.

## CHAPTER VI

[1] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 42, 41-57.

[2] *Srednyaya Azia, Uchebanaya Karta; Masshtab*, 1 : 1,500,000, (Moscow, 1954).

[3] *Hudūd* (6, 10).

[4] P. Luknitsky, *Soviet Tajikistan*, p. 209.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 206-7.

[6] *Hudūd*, p. 115.

[7] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 44, 1-24.

[8] *Ibid.*, Ch. 44.

[9] *Ibid.*, Ch. 44.

[10] *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER VII

[1] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 42, 1-24.

[2] *Ibid.*, Ch. 35, 8.

[3] *Ibid.*, Ch. 36, 18-19 (in the Bombay edn. 'Sauvīra' is substituted for 'Sudhīra'; Vṛṣabha for Kṛṣṇa Ruc Aka; for Savindhu and Venūman for Reṇumān.

[4] *Ibid.*, Ch. 42, 12-24.

[5] *Ibid.*, Ch. 35.

[6] Huen Tsang, *Life* (Beal), p. 99.

[7] *Hudūd*, p. 70.

[8] The Bombay edn. says 'Bhagwatī like Lakṣmī' which appears to be correct.

[9] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 37, 1-15.

[10] *Ibid.*, Ch. 37, 16-21.

[11] *Ibid.*, Ch. 39.

[12] 'Hundred' appears to be a misprint. It should be about a 'thousand'.

[13] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 39, 28-30.

[14] *Ibid.*, 32.

[15] Their names are: Hansavatī, Hahacakrā, Cakrā, Vaktā, Kandī, Surasā, Śakhavatī, Indranadī, Meghā, Aṅgara, Vāhinī, Kāverī, Sorṇavṛatā, Hari toyā, Suvarnā, Brahmabhogā, Śilā-Sinī, Pancvadnā, Vaṇuṣmatī, Maṇi-Vaprā, Surapsā, Śat, Hṛdā, Vanamālā, Kṛṣṇatoyā, Pūrṇaodā, Vasumatī, Paṁpā, Paṁpāvatī, Arunāvatī, Viṣṇupadī, Mahāpuṇyā, Mahānadī, Hiraṇyavāpinī, Nīlā, Skandamālā, Surāvatī, Vamodā, Patakā and Betālī (*Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 43).

[16] *Ibid.*, Ch. 39.

[17] I.e., the Jathara.

[18] *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 40.

[19] *Ibid.*, Ch. 43.

## CHAPTER VIII

[1] There is sufficient literature on the geography of Bhāratavarṣa. An exhaustive list of the source material appears in B.C. Law's *Historical Geography of Ancient India* and Cunningham's *Ancient India*. Dr. D. C. Sircar in his *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India* mainly deals with the physiographic and regional content of Bhāratavarṣa as given in the Purāṇic and later literature. It also contains extracts from the Purāṇas which are relevant to the geography of the country. These and other works of N. L. Dey (*Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India*), Ray Chowdhry (*Studies in Indian Antiquities*), Dikshiter (*Puranic Index*) and other scholars are helpful in visualising the extent, topography and population pattern of Bhāratavarṣa as described in the Purāṇas.

## CHAPTER IX

[1] The Nāgarasaṁvṛtah of Alberuni is obviously a copyist's mistake (Alberuni's *Indica*, 1, 295).

[2] *Mark.* p. 57.

[3] According to the Skanda Purāṇa, Kumārika Khaṇḍa extended from only the Mahendra mountain to the Pariyātra (Kumārika Khaṇḍa, 39, 113); according to the Garuḍa Purāṇa, however, it was bounded on the east by the Kiratas, on the west by the Yavanas, on the south by the Andhras and on the north by Turuskas (55.6).

[4] V. A. Smith, *Early History of India,* 4th edn., p. 491.

[5] Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India* (Calcutta, 1924).

[6] Varāhamihira is supposed to have adopted the tradition earlier recorded by Paras 'ara in his Paras' aratantra. See, Kern's edn. of *Bṛhatsaṁhita of Varāha*, p. 32.

[7] B. C. Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism,* Intro.

[8] *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, 36, 64.

## CHAPTER X

[1] Some of the janapadas mentioned in the Purāṇic lists have been omitted in the discussion which follows, since their identification is purely arbitrary. However, they have been plotted on the accompanying map with the help of Pargiter, Dey, Law and Sircar's works.

[2] L. W. Lyde, *The Continent of Asia* (London, 1938), p. 401.

[3] T. H. Holdich, *The Gates of India* (London, 1910), p. 162.

[4] *Hudūd*, p. 111.

[5] Also see Bhandarkar's notices in the *Indian Antiquary*, September 1933.

[6] Identified by Ray Chaudhry.

[7] *Agni*, 275, 10; *Vāyu*, 94,3-54; *Matsya*, 43. 7-49, etc.

[8] *Matsya*, 43, 44, 48; *Vāyu*, 94, 95, 96.

[9] Ādiparva, 218, 219, 220, 221; Udyogaparva 28, 157, 158, Aśwamedhaparva, 59; Sabhaparva 62.

[10] Udyogaparva, V. 28.

## CHAPTER XII

[1] The number in brackets which follow a statement pertains to the number of paragraph of chapter 48 of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* (Calcutta edn.).

[2] 'Three times three thousand yojanas', has been interpreted by many scholars as '9,000 yojanas'.

[3] *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VIII, p. 302.

## CHAPTER XIII

[1] *RV*, X. 130.

[2] *RV*, X. 72, 2 (Griffith's tr.), p. 496.

[3] H. W. Wallis, *The Cosmology of the Rigveda*, p. 17.

[4] *Bṛhad Up.* I, 2, 1-3.

[5] *RV*, I. 67, 3; VI. 7, 7.

[6] *RV*, VI. 47, 4; VI. 72, 2.

[7] *RV*, I. 115, 1.

[8] *RV* , VIII. 3, 6; 36, 4; 78, 5.

[9] *Svet. Up.*, III. 2; VI. 9.

[10] *Ait. Up.*, II, 1, 2-9.

[11] *Ait. Br.*, V. 32 (Keith's *Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇas*, p. 256).

[12] *Kauśit. Br.*, VI. 1.

[13] The first book of the Moses called *Genesis, Old Testament*, Chapter I, Paras 1-31 (extracts).

[14] 'Ocean' here signified a huge aggregate of molten or gaseous matter.

[15] *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (Wilson, Tr.), Bk. V. p. 34.

# APPENDIX

## SAKA DWIFA

THE following letters regarding the Saka Dwipa from two eminent scholars and my reply thereto are self-explanatory and may be of interest to the readers:

### I

*Copy of a letter from Pandit Dwarka Prasad Mishra to Prof. S. M. Ali, dated 20 October 1962.*

My Dear Ali Saheb,

I have now been able to go through the manuscript. It is a great work and I have no doubt that it would be translated in various Indian languages.

I have only one important point to raise. I am convinced that your identification of Shakdwipa (Sakadwipa) is wrong. We have so much literature in Sanskrit regarding Brāhmins from Shakdwipa migrating to India and introducing Sun-worship here that it has been taken for granted that this Dwipa was somewhere close to Iran, probably eastern Iran. I would, therefore, like you to reconsider the matter. There are one or two other doubtful identifications but they are rather unimportant....

Yours sincerely,
D. P. Mishra

### II

*Copy of a letter from Dr. Sampurnanand, Rajyapal, Rajasthan, Jaipur, to Prof. S. M. Ali, 4 January 1963.*

My Dear Prof. Ali,

I have gone through your book and am returning it herewith. Let me confess that my study of the work has been rather cursory. I should like to congratulate you on the very useful book which you have written. Some other people have also written on the subject of the geography of ancient India. From the bibliography attached at the end of the book, it seems that at least some of these books have not attracted your notice. Some of them are well worth reading. I can realise that there is considerable room for difference of opinion about some of the questions involved in such a study, but hard work put in by pioneers like you is never wasted. Further research may upset some of the results arrived at by previous workers in the field but later authors can never sufficiently repay the debt they owe to those who have gone before them. I trust it will be possible for you to bring out an edition in Hindi.

As an example, a question on which it is possible to have two opinions at present, I refer to what you have said about the Sakadwipa. There are many who would place this area somewhere to the north-west of what is now India. In the first place, there is the association with the Sakas or Scythians who certainly invaded India in historical times from the north-west. Among other evidence, I may refer to the origin ascribed in ancient literature to the Sakadwipi Brahman community living in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Western Bihar. They themselves say that they were invited to come to India to cure Sri Krishna's grandson Shamba who was suffering from leprosy. They were reputed to be great adepts of the cult of Surya in their homelands. They were known as maga (magis?) Brahmans. You know very well that the priests of the Scythians were known as Magi. They are referred to by this name not only in old Persian literature but even in the Bible. All this would suggest that the land of the Sakas was the land of the Scythians who certainly lived beyond our western frontiers. However, these things only point to the necessity of making further study of this very important subject.

Yours sincerely,
SAMPURNANAND

## III

*Reply by Prof. S. M. Ali to Dr. Sampurnanand, dated 11 February 1963.*

MY DEAR BABUJI,

I am extremely grateful to you for your kind and affectionate letter which I find so encouraging. I wish I could get an opportunity of discussing with you personally a few points in addition to those which you have raised in your letter.

As regards Sakadwipa, I may venture to say that I spent some time on its identification for which I mainly relied on the notices of the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana, e.g. Mbt. (12.14, 21.5), and (6.11.4), Rāmāyana (4.40, 19.54), and (4.43.12), etc., which place Sakadwipa east of Meru. Besides this, if we equate Sakadwipa with Seistan or any other region of Central or Western Asia, it does not fit into the Purāṇic plan of 7 Dwīpas or Continents of the World. Regional descriptions of the Purāṇas show undoubtedly and explicitly that most of the smaller regions of Central and Western Asia which are generally associated with Scythians (as in the *Geography* of Herodotus and Smiths' *Geographical Dictionary*) or Sakas were included in Jambu Dwipa.

Sakas are also expressly mentioned in the Mbt. and practically in all

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

the Purāṇas as a (barbarian?) tribe dwelling in the north or north-west. But it is to be noted that nowhere do they connect Sakas with Sakadwipa. The two terms are entirely independent of each other.

It is true that Scythians penetrated into India from the northwest and that Sakas denote Scythians. It appears to be correct that magis or magas (Scythian priests) or maga Brahmins migrated to Bhārat from their homeland and settled down as scattered communities in the north-west. If the maga Brahmins say that they migrated from the 'land where Sakas lived', they are literally correct. But this assertion is certainly independent of the fact that 'Sakadwipa' is the old name of one of the 'Seven Continents of the World.' In other words, in the former case Sakadwipa= the land of Sakas (a people), and in the latter Sakadwipa=the teak region of the world.

I feel that I may not have made myself clear in the above paragraphs but I am certain that the term Sakadwipa (loosely applied to land of Saka people) was coined much later and gave cause to be confused with the established name Sakadwipa, one of the Seven Purāṇics Continents. In fact the name Saka-sthan (Seistan) was a better term to indicate the name of the land where Sakas lived.

I am sorry I have taken much of your valuable time, but I feel so encouraged when I get an opportunity of discussing Ancient Indian Geography with eminent scholars like you who really understand what I want to say.

With respectful regards,

Yours sincerely,
S. M. Ali

## IV

*Dr. Sampurnanand's reply to Prof. S. M. Ali, dated 17 February 1963.*

My Dear Prof. Ali,

Your letter provided very interesting and instructive reading. In common with the majority of laymen, I have so far been entertaining the idea that the word Sakadwipa means the land of the Sakas or Scythians; that the term had any other meaning never seemed to strike me. The interpretation which you have now put upon it must be quite new to a very large number of people, including, I am sure, a number of scholars both Indian and foreign.

Thank you very much for taking so much trouble to enlighten me.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sampurnanand

# SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

## (A) TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES

Abbott, J. E., 'The Topographical List of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa,' *Indian Antiquary*, 1899.

*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

*Bhavish Purāṇa,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

*Brahma Purāṇa,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

*Bṛhatsaṁhitā,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

Burnnoff, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* Tr. Paris.

Dikshitar, V. R. R.. (1) *Matsya Purāṇa: A Study,* Madras Univ. Publ.; (2) *Purāṇic Index,* Madras; (3) *Some Aspects of the Vāyu Purāṇa,* Madras Univ. Publications, Madras.

Dutt, M. N., *Agni Purāṇa,* Tr. 1900.

Dumout, P. E., *Kūrma Purāṇa,* Tr. (French).

*Garuḍa Purāṇa,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

*Harivaṁsa,* Bangabashi Office, Calcutta.

Hazra, R. C., *The Padma Purāṇa, Indian Culture,* Vol. 4, 1937-8, pp. 73-9.

——, *The Liṅga Purāṇa, Indian Culture,* Vol. 4, 1937-8, pp. 415-33.

*Kavyamīmaṁsa of Rājaśekhara,* G.O.S. ed., Baroda.

*Kūrma Purāṇa,* (1) Bangabashi Press, Calcutta; (2) *RASB* Calcutta; (3) Venkatesvara Press, Bombay.

*Mahābhārata,* Bangabashi Press, Calcutta.

*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* (1) Ed. M. C. Pal, Calcutta; (2) *RASB,* Calcutta, 1862; (3) Bangabashi Office, Calcutta; (4) Venkateshwara Press, Bombay.

*Matsya Purāṇa,* (1) Bangabashi Office, Calcutta; (2) Venkateswara Press, Bombay; (3) Anandasrama Press, Poona.

Pargiter, F. E., *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* Tr.

Patil, D. R., *Cultural History from the Vāyu Purāṇa,* Poona, 1946.

Pusalkar, A. D., *Studies in Epics and Purāṇas,* Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

*Rāmāyaṇa,* Nirnayasagara Press, Bombay.

Sastri, A. K., *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa,* Tr., Madras, 1888.

Trivedi, H. V., 'Studies in Ancient Geography' (Topographical Contents of Agni Purāṇa), *Indian Historical Quarterly,* Vol. IX, 1933.

——'Studies in Ancient Geography' (Topographical Contents of Vol. X, 1934, Markeṇḍeya Purāṇa).

*Vāmana Purāṇa,* (1) M. C. Pal, Calcutta, 1893; (2) Venkateswara Press, Bombay.

*Vāyu Purāṇa,* (1) Bangabashi Office, Calcutta; (2) *RASB,* Calcutta; (3) Venkateshvara Press, Bombay; (4) Anandasrama Press, Poona.

Wilson, H. H., *Viṣṇu Purāṇa,* Tr.

Wood Earnest & Subrahmanyam, *Garuḍa Purāṇa,* Tr., Panini Office, Allahabad.

## (B) GENERAL WORKS

Agrawala, V. S., *Pāṇinikālīna Bhārata,* Varanasi, 1955.

*Asiatic Researches,* London:

- Vol. VII–'On the Course of the Ganges through Bengal' (R. H. Colebrooks);
- Vol. VIII–'An Essay on the Sacred Isles on the West with other Essays connected with the Works' (F. Wilford);
- Vol. IX – " " " " "
- Vol. X – " " " " "
- Vol. XIV–'The Principal Peaks of the Himalayas' (J. Hodgson and J. D. Herbert);
- Vol. XVI–'Geography of Assam' (J. B. Neufville).

*Asiatic Society of Bengal, Journal of,* Calcutta.

- Vol. –'Geographical Notice of Tibet' (Csoma de koros);
- Vol. IV – 'The Course of the Narmada' (Ouseley);
- Vol. XX – 'The Rajmehal Hills' (W. S. Sherwill);
- –'A Comparative Essay on the Ancient Geography of India' (F. Wilford);
- Vol. XLVI – 'The Kaimur Range' (C. S. Bannerji);
- " " 'Ancient dwellings and tribes in Baluchistan' (E. Mockler);
- " " 'Ancient Countries in Eastern India' (F. E. Pargiter).

Clark, W. E., 'Sakadwipa and Svetadwipa', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* Vol. 39, 1919.

Cunningham and Mazumdar, *Ancient Geography of India,* Calcutta, 1924.

Dey, N. L., *Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India,* Luzac, London.

Dhyanchand, 'Ancient Hindu Geography', *Educational Review,* Vol. XXIX, 5, 7 & 8.

Holdich, T., *The Gates of India,* London, 1910.

*Indian Antiquary:*

- 1874 – 'Geography of Ibn Battuta's Travels in India' (H. Yule);
- 1885 – 'On the Identification of Places in Sanskrit Geography of India' (J. Bargess);
- 1893 – 'The Topographical List of the Brihat-Samhita' (J. F. Fleat);
- 1899 – 'The Topographical List of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (J. E. Abbott);
- 1919-1921 – 'Contributions to the Study of the Ancient Geography of India' (S. N. Majumdar);
- 1921 – 'The Early Course of the Ganges' (N. L. Day);

1923 – 'Geographical Position of Certain Places in India';
1924 – 'History of Important Ancient Towns and Cities of Gujerat and Kathiawad' (A. S. Altekar);
1932 – 'The River Course of the Punjab and Sind' (R. B. Whitehead).

*Indian Culture*, Vol. I, No. 2, 'The Geography of Kautelya' (H. V. Trivedi);
No. 3, 'Yavanas in Early Indian Inscriptions' (A. Stein);
No. 4, 'Geographical Data of the Dekkan and South India as gathered from the Rāmāyana' (V. R. R. Dikshitar).
Vol. II, No. 1, 'Chandradwipa' (N. N. Das Gupta).

*Indian Historical Quarterly*:
Vol. IV, 'The Study of Ancient Indian Geography' (H. C. Ray Chaudhri); 'The Study of Ancient Geography' (H. V. Trivedi); 'Eastern India and Aryavarta' (H. C. Chakladar);
Vol. V, 'The Karoura of Ptolemy' (K. V. K. Ayyar);
Vol. VII, 'Topography in the Puranas' (S. B. Chaudhry); 'Identification of Brahmottra' (K. M. Gupta);
Vol. VIII, 'Some Janpadas of Ancient Radha' (P. C. Sen);
Vol. IX, 'Pundravardhana–Its Site' (P. C. Sen);
Vol. X, 'The Study in Ancient Geography' (H. V. Trivedi);
Vol. XXVII, Text of the Purāṇic List of Rivers' (D. C. Sircar).

Jayachandra, *Bhārata Bhūmi aur uske Nivāsī*, Allahabad, 1930.
—— *Bhāratiya Itihās Kī Rūparekhā*, 2 volumes, Allahabad, 1933.
Kirfel, Prof. W., *Die Kosmographie der Inder*, Leipzig, 1920.
Law, B. C., *Tribes of Ancient India*.
Law, B. C., 'Holy Places of India', *Journ. Geog. Soc.*, Calcutta, 1940.
—— 'Mountains of India and Rivers of India,' *Jour. Geog. Soc.*, Calcutta, 1944.
—— *Historical Geography of Ancient India*, Paris, 1954.
—— *Geographical Essays*, Luzac, London, 1937.
McCrindle, J. W., *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Calcutta, 1926.
—— *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erythraean Sea*, Calcutta, 1879.
—— *Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy*, Calcutta, 1885.
—— *Ancient India as Described by Ktesias and Knidian*, Calcutta, 1882.
—— *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, Calcutta, 1901.

*Mythical Society, Quarterly Journal of* (Bangalore):
Vol. XV, Nos. 1 & 2, 'The Seven Dwipas of the Purāṇas' (V. V. Ayyar).
Vol. XVI, Nos. 2 & 4, ” ” ”
Vol. XVII, Nos. 1 & 2, ” ” ”

Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Traditions.*

*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea,* Trans. W. H. Schoff.

Przylaski, Jean, *Names of Indian Towns in the Geography of Ptolemy*, Bull de la Societe de Linguistique.

—— *'Un ancien peuple du Punjab', Journal Asiatique,* 1926.

Renou, L., *La geographie de Ptolemee l'Inde,* Paris, 1925.

*Royal Asiatic Society, Journal of the*:

1894 – 'Geography of Rama's Exile' (F. E. Pargiter);
1898 – 'The Geography of the Kandahar Inscription';
1902 – 'Vaisali' (V. A. Smith);
1903 – 'Where was Malwa?' (A. F. R. Hoernle);
1904 – 'The Middle Country of Ancient India' (T. W. Rhys David);
1912 – 'The Kambojas' (Grierson);
1916 – 'Some Notes on the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea' (J. Kennedy);
1917 – 'Some River names in the Rigveda' (M. A. Stein);
1918 – 'Magadha and Videha' (F. E. Pargiter);
1929 – 'Two notes on the Ancient Geog. of India' (J. Ph. Vogel).

Sircar, D. C., *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India,* Varanasi, 1960.

Upadhyaya, B. S., *Kālidāsa Kā Bhārata,* Allahabad, 1958.

Vivien de Saint Matin, *Etude sur la Geographie Grecque et Latine de l'Inde, et en particulier sur l'Inde de Ptolemee.*

Warren, W. F., 'Where was Sakadwipa in the Mythical World-View of India', *Journal of American Oriental Society,* Vol. 40, 1920.

## ARAB AND PERSIAN GEOGRAPHICAL WORKS

(Containing references to India)

### (A) TEXTS, TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES

Abu'l-Fida, *Taqwim al-Buldan. Geographie of Aboulfeda,* Text ed. M. Reinaud and M.de Slane, Paris, 1840.

Abu Zayd, *Silsilat al-Tawarikh. Relation des voyages faits par les Arabes et les Persans, dans l'Inde et a la Chine,* etc. Text, tr. and notes by Langles and Reinaud, 2 vols. Paris, 1845.

—— *Anciennes relations des Indes et de la Chine, de deux vayageurs mahometans qui y allerent dans le IX siecle de notre ere* (Abbe Renaudot) 55.

Amin Ahmad Razi, *Haft Iqlim,* Vol. I, ed. E. Denison Ross and others, Calcutta, 1939.

Al-Biruni, *Alberuni's India,* tr. and annotations by E. C. Sachau, London, 1910. 2 Vols.

—— *Biruni's Picture of the World*, ed. A. Zeki Validi Togan, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 53.

Buzurg Ibn Shahriyar, *Kitab 'Aja' ib al-Hind, Le livres des marveilles de l'Inde*, text by P. A. van der Lith and tr. by L. M. Devic, Leiden, 1883-86.

Ferrand, Gabriel, *Relations de voyages et textes geographiques arabes, persans et turcs relatifs a l' Extreme-Orient*, etc. 2 Vols. Paris, 1913, 1914.

Gardizi, *Gardizi on India* by V. Minorsky, *BSOAS*, 1948, XII, 3 & 4.

Hajji Khalifa, *Jihannuma*, Istanbul, 1145/1732.

Hudūd al-'Ālam, (*A Persian Geography of* 982 *A.D.*) tr. and Commentary by V. Minorsky, *GMS*, N. S. XI, London, 1937.

Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa*, H. A. R. Gibb, London, 1929.

—— *Ibn Battuta on Sumatra and Java* (Dulaurier, Paris).

Al-Idrisi, *India and the Neighbouring Territories as described by the Sharif al-Idrisi*, ed. S. Maqbul Ahmad, Aligarh, 1954.

Al-Qalaqashandi, *An Arab Account of India in the 14th Century* (translation of the chapters on India in Subh al-A'sha), by Otto Spies, M. U. Press, Aligarh.

Sidi Ali Re'is, *Al-Muhit*. Extracts Published by M. de Hammer in *JASB*, III, 1834; Vol. V, 1836; Vol. VII and Vol. VIII, 1838.

—— *The Travels and Adventures of the Turkish Admiral Sidi Ali Ra'is in India, Afghanistan, Central Asia and Persia during* 1553-56. tr. by A. Vambery, London, 1899.

Sulayman the Merchant, *Voyage du marchand arabe Sulayman en Inde et en Chine*, tr. G. Ferrand, Paris, 1922.

Akhbar al-Sin wa'l-Hind, *Relation de la Chine et de l'Inde* ,ed. and tr. by J. Sauvaget, Paris, 1948.

Yaqui, *Mu'jam al-Buldan*, ed. F. Wustenfeld, Leipzig, 1866-78.

## (B) GENERAL WORKS

Abbe Duboi, *Mems. des penples de l'Inde*, Paris.

Ali, S. M., *Arab Geography*, Institute of Islamic Studies, Aligarh, 1959.

Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. Jarrett, Calcutta, 1949.

Barthold, V. V., *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, *GMS*, N.S.V., London, 1928 (see Chapter I).

Beazley, A. C., *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, 3 vols., London, 1900.

Ferrand, G., *L'Empire Sumatranais de Crivijaya*, *Journ. Asiat.*, 1922, Tome XX.

—— *Relations des voyages et texts geographiques Arabes*, Paris.

Hastings, H., *Memoires relatifs a l etat de l'Inde*, Paris, 1788.

Honigmann, E., *Die sieben Klimata*, Heidelberg, 1929.

Le Strange, G., *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate,* 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1930.

Maqbul Ahmad, S., *Al-Mas'udi's Contribution to Mediaeval Arab Geography in Islamic Culture,* vols XXVII, No. 2 and XXVIII, No. 1.

Nainar, M. H., *Arab Geographer's Knowledge of Southern India,* Madras, 1942.

Ouseley, M., *The Oriental Geography of Ibn-i-Haukal,* London, 1800.

Raverty, H. G., *The Mihran of Sind and its Tributaries,* Calcutta, 1892-97.

Reinaud, M., *Fragments arabes et persans inedits sur l'Inde.*

—— *Memoire Geographique sur l'Inde.*

Tozer, H. F., *A History of Ancient Geography,* Cambridge, 1935.

# INDEX

Ābhiras, 131, 140, 144, 157, 163, 167
Abhra, 166
Acalottamavirāja, 74
Acchodā, 65
Afghanistan, 59, 89, 109, 142
Āgastya Āśrama, 180, 181
Agni, 5, 6, 12, 13, 28, 41, 48, 94, 95, 112, 187
Agnibāhu, 10
Agnidhara, 4, 10
Agnimāla, 36
Agnivarcas, 1
Ahicchatra, 135, 174
Ain-i-Akbari, 126
Airavata, 32, 103
Airāvatī, 8
Aitareya Brāhmana, 130, 187
Ajanta, 146, 154, 155
Ajas, 20
Akritavṛaṇa, 1
Akṣu, 101, 103, 104, 105
Alai Valley, 52, 62, 73
Alaknandā, 56, 61, 62
Alasa, 165
Alberuni, 7, 126, 127, 180
Ali-bhadra, 165
Aling-Kangri, 68, 69
Alinas, 19
Ali madra, 165
Allah, 189
Altin Tagh, 99, 100, 102, 104, 107
Ambasthas, 131
Amu Darya, 89, 90, 97
Ananda Jala, 75, 82
Anant Sadana, 94, 95
Ananta, 129, 130, 163
Anarta, 130, 146, 166
Anasūyā, 9
Andhakas, 158, 163
Andhra Pradesh, 154, 156, 157, 166, 168, 173
Andhras, 7, 20, 156, 157, 172
Aṅga, 20, 150, 151, 166, 171, 173, 175, 183
Aṅga Dwīpa, 179
Aṅga laukika, 164
Aṅgalokika, 164
Aṅgaloka, 141
Aṅgiras, 9, 15
Ānīkata, 166
Añjana, 96, 134
Añjanācala, 94, 95
Añjani, 93
Annaja, 169
Antargiri, 152, 166
Anūpa, 162, 169
Anus, 19
Anuṣāñga, 3
Apaga, 165, 174
Aparānta, 131, 133, 163, 173, 175
Aparīta, 163
Apasa, 165
Apathā, 169
Arabian Sea, 109, 129, 139, 153, 183
Arakan Yoma, 178, 179
Āraṇya, 168
Āraṇyakas, 16
Aravallis, 112, 116, 136, 138, 146, 158, 159, 170
Arbuda, 131, 146, 166, 172, 173
Arctic, 20, 81, 83, 87
Ārjikas, 19
Arjikiya, 114
Arjuna, 23, 24, 130
Arpa, 113, 125
Arsana, 130
A(r)thapa, 163
Arthava, 163
Aruṇa Śṛṅgavān, 66

Arundhati, 18
Arunoda, 62, 100, 101
Arūpa, 169
Arvuda, 163
Ārya Gālava, 167
Āryan, 16, 17, 19, 20, 134, 156
Āsandīvat, 19
Asinīla, 166
Askinī, 114
Asmaka, 154, 155, 168, 173
Asmakas, 172
Aśoka, 97, 109, 127, 134, 153
Aśokavana, 74
Assakas, 175
*Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Panini, 137
Aswamedha Parva, 24
Āṭavya, 168
Atharva Veda, 16, 18, 20, 130
Atrayotha, 165
Atreya, 165
Atri, 8, 9
Atya Karalgolwala, 97
Aurasas, 140, 143
Auṣadha, 165
Avantī, 117, 158, 159, 166, 169, 172, 173
Avantis, 20, 172
Avarṇī, 117
Āyatana, 8
✓Āyodhyā, 21, 22, 134, 135, ✓ 175
Ayodhyākāṇḍa, 21

BACTRIA, 83, 97, 142
Badarikāśrama, 7
Bahirgiri, 152, 166
Bahu, 141
Bahu Bhadra, 141
Bāhudā, 115, 124
Bāhudāsa, 115
Bahūdaka, 169
Bāhuka, 165
Bāhyā, 122, 163
Bāhyatodara, 165
Bairāta, 137
Baitaranī, 113, 121
Bakulā, 97
Bālhīka, 21
Balis, 142
Balistan, 142
Balochis, 142
Baluchistan, 132, 139, 141, 142
Bāluvāhinī, 119
Banas, 116, 136, 137, 146, 159, 172
Banawāsi, 153
Bandhanā, 116
Banganga, 116, 137
Barind, 159, 150, 151
Barvani, 161, 162
Bāsikya, 166
Baudhāyana, 20, 109, 131
Beas, 115, 144, 170, 171
Bengal, 121, 148, 151
Bengal, Bay of, 109, 129, 153
Bhadguraka, 166
Bhadra Somā, 62, 74, 75, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85, 86
Bhadrakāra, 137, 138, 163, 164
Bhadrāśwa, 10, 33, 64, 65, 73
Bhadravaka, 166
Bhadravarṣa, 25, 52, 58, 99, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108
Bhagalpur, 152, 171
Bhāgavata, 4, 11, 12, 28, 42, 48, 84, 182
Bhagīratha, 11, 67, 68, 69
Bhāgīrathī, 12, 61, 62, 68, 171
Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly, 148, 149, 151
Bhalanas, 19
Bhān(r)ukaccha, 166
Bhārata, 1, 4, 5, 10, 14, 22, 23, 50, 57, 124
Bharatas, 19
Bhāratavarsa, 3, 7, 13, 14, 36, 40, 52, 63, 64, 109, 110, 112, 113, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 133, 142, 146, 170, 177, 178, 179
Bharadwāj(ak)a, 165
Bhārgava, 167
Bhārukaccha, 166
Bhāskarācārya, 24, 126
Bhaurṇaka, 108
Bhava, 9
Bhavimardra, 108
Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, 5

Bhavya, 10
Bhesakalavana, 134
Bhīmā, 97, 122, 154
Bhīmarathā, 122
Bhīmarathī, 122
Bhīsma Parva, 23, 48, 159
Bhīrukaccha, 166
Bhogavarddhana, 155, 168
Bhoja, 158, 159, 168
Bhojya, 168
Bhramara, 97
Bhṛgu, 9
Bhṛgukaccha, 175
Bhuliṅga, 137, 138
Bhūmi Khaṇḍa, 2, 13
Bhuvana Khaṇḍa, 13
Bhuvana Kośa, 13
Bhuvana Sāgara, 13
Bihar, 133, 148, 150, 151, 152
Biyatta, 115
Bodha, 137, 138, 163
Brahmā, 35, 41, 48, 84, 87, 138, 152, 185, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 196
Brahmagupta, 24
Brahma Purāṇa, 2, 6, 7, 11, 13
Brahma Pārśva Peāk, 54
Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, 6
Brāhmaṇas, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 75, 93, 105, 126, 127, 130, 187
Brahmāṇḍa (Purāṇa), 5, 7, 8, 12, 28, 42, 131, 147, 182
Brahmaputrā, 20, 61, 66, 113, 115, 128, 148, 151, 171
Brahmaputrā-Yamunā Doāb, 149
Brāhmī, 97, 157
Brāhmaṇī, 121
Brahmottara (Janapada), 152, 167
Brahmottara Khaṇḍa, 6
Braja, 137
Bṛhadā Upanisad, 17
Bṛhat Saṁhitā, 46
Buddha, 134, 175, 190
Buddhi, 9
Buddhistic, 131, 135, 141, 174, 185, 189, 190
Burma, 126, 176
CAHUKA, 165
Caiṣīka, 168
Cakaragiri, 179
Campā, 150, 175
Campāvatī, 97
Cañcalā, 119
Candanā, 116
Candaura, 176
Candrakānta, 76, 86, 108
Candra Mountain, 78
Candra, 114
Càndrabhāgā, 114
Candra Dwīpa, 77, 78, 86, 87
Candravantā, 77
Candravarittā, 86, 87
Candraha, 115
Candramā, 187
Candraprabha, 65, 66, 70
Candrāvatī, 97
Cape Comorin, 155, 172
Cāraṇas, 77, 85
Carma Khaṇḍa, 141
Carmakhaṇḍika, 163
Carmaṇvatī, 61, 117
Cauḍa, 167
Caulya, 167
Caya, 94
Cedis, 159
Ceylon, 127, 129
Chaghanian, 92, 96, 98
Chakṣu, 62, 66, 67, 68, 89, 90
Chaldean, 192, 193
Chambal, 112, 117, 132, 136, 137, 157, 158, 159, 160
Chimkend, 81, 82
China, 21, 171, 176
Chinese, 86, 180
Chirchick, 80, 81
Chhotā-Nāgpur, 130, 157, 170
Citra Sena, 56
Citrakūṭa, 22, 118
Citrotpālā, 118, 119
Cola(s), 156, 167, 172
Contai Coastal Plain, 149, 151
Coromandal, 155, 156
Cosmogony, 184, 193
Cosmography, 184, 193

Cosmology, 184, 193
Cucukas, 157
Cūdika, 165
Cu(ū)lika, 165
Cunningham, 109, 127, 128, 136, 146, 150, 151, 174
Cutch, 146, 172

DABHRAVATI, 97
Dahimāla, 36
Dakṣa, 9, 97
Dakṣiṇa Mānasa, 71
Dakṣiṇāpath, 21, 131, 133, 152
Dakṣiṇa Kosala, 84, 113
Dakṣiṇa Deśa, 173
Dakṣiṇa Pāñcāla, 174
Daman Gaṅgā, 148
Damodar, 121, 152
Daṁsanasttha, 164
Daṇḍaka, 22, 156, 157, 168, 172
Daṇḍā, 97
Dantaparanagara, 156
Dantapura, 156, 175
Daradas, 140, 143, 164, 171
Darwaz (Range), 90, 91
Dārva, 143, 166
Daśamālika, 164
Dasámaṇaka, 164
Daśamānika, 164
Daśamāsttha, 164
Dasanamaka, 164
Daśārṇā, 118, 158, 159, 168, 172, 173
Daśaratha, 21
Daśavibhāga, 126
Deccan, 22, 153, 154, 160, 170
Deeg, 115, 136
Delhi, 134, 135, 136
Demons, 54, 55, 75, 96, 103, 106
Deśamanka, 141
Deśapradeśa, 54, 55
Devabhṛja, 89
Devakūṭa (mountain), 3, 53, 57, 99, 100, 102, 105, 107
Devas, 54, 75, 77, 89, 96, 103, 106, 107
Devāpi, 94
Devācala, 100
Deva-Śaila, 105
Devikā, 115
Devī Gaṅgā, 68
Devikā Kuhu, 115
Dhātake Khaṇḍam, 42
Dhanvatī, 117
Dhasan, 118, 157, 159, 179
Dhāta(u)kī Khaṇḍa, 33, 44
Dhanlī Gaṅgā, 64
Dhaulgiri, 50, 51
Dhāulī, 62
Dhṛtarāṣṭra, 33
Dhṛti, 9
Dhūmaja, 97
Dhūmralohita, 66, 67
Dhutapāpā, 115
Dhūtpāpā, 115
Dhūtvāhinī, 119
Dir, 143
Dṛśadvatī, 115
Druhyus, 19
Druma, 56
Dudhkośī, 115
Durgā, 148, 166
Durgala, 166
Dvarwati, 176
Dvirāja, 75, 80
Dwāraka, 158
Dwīpas, 2, 4, 8, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47
Dyutiman, 179
Dyutimat, 10

EKACHA, 97
Epics, 21, 31, 109, 110, 133, 135

FARGHANA, 80, 81

GABALA, 164
Gabhastimān, 126, 127, 130
Galava, 48
Gambhīr(a), 117, 136
Gaṇadwīpa, 35
Gaṇḍak(i), 115, 133, 148, 150, 175
Gaṇḍak-Raptī

Gaṅgā Doāb, 150
Gandhamādana, 10, 52, 58, 89, 91, 93
Gāndhāra(s), 143, 145, 163, 172, 173
Gandhāri, 19
Gandharva Khaṇḍa, 127, 129
Gandharva(s), 53, 54, 56, 57, 70, 71, 75, 94, 96, 103, 106, 107, 126, 129, 130, 174
Gandharvi, 70
Ganeśa Khaṇḍa, 6
Gaṅgā, 4, 11, 12, 21, 22, 65, 67, 68, 69, 112, 114, 119, 127, 135, 136, 148, 149, 150, 151, 159, 170, 171, 174
Gaṅgā Avtāra Varnan, 65, 69
Gaṅgā-Brahmaputrā Doāb, 151
Gaṅgā-Gomatī Doāb, 151
Gaṅgā-Yamunā Doāb, 135
Gaṅgetic Plain (Basin), 128, 129, 132, 150
Gangetic Delta, 129, 149
Garga, 48
Garuḍa, 87
Garuḍa Purāṇa, 126, 127, 129
Gaura (Mountain), 67, 68
Gaurī Gaṅgā, 64
Geyamallaka, 167
Geyamarṣ(y)aka, 167
Geyamarthaka, 167
Geyamalava, 167
Ghagara, 175
Ghaggar, 114, 115, 133, 135
Ghats, *see* Western Ghats
Ghṛtoda, 35
Ghritoda Sea, 46
Gilgit, 102, 146
Giri, 93
Girivṛaja, 22, 146
Girṇa, 148, 171
Godava, 97
Godāvarī, 113, 122, 130, 138, 147, 154, 155, 156, 157, 172, 175, 176, 177
Gogrā, 62, 115, 170
Gomatī, 4, 114, 115, 135
Gomanuṣya, 97
Gomanta, 167
Gomeda, 29, 39, 167
Gomeda Dwīpa, 8
Gonanda, 167
Gonardda, 167
Govinda, 167
Greek(s), 27, 30, 127, 140, 141, 143, 144, 182, 185, 193
Gujarat, 136, 137, 157, 158
Guhas, 157
Guṇaka, 165
Gurgaṇa, 169
Gurjara, 137
Gurlā Māndhātā, 66
Gwalior, 158, 160

HAGARI, 122, 154
Haibhauma, 108
Haihayas, 158
Haiṣīka, 168
Haṁsa, 58
Haṁsamārga, 165, 169
Hangaparvata, 74
Hansmargas, 173
Harahaura (Hara Huna), 130
Hāra-hūras, 171
Hārabhūṣika, 141, 164
Hāramūrtika, 141, 164
Hārahūṇaka, 164
Hāramūrṣika, 164
Hārapūrika, 164
Hari, 53, 97
Harikeśa, 56
Hari Rud, 171
Harṣavardhana, 164
Harivaṁśa, 11, 23, 32, 151
Hari-varṣa, 7, 10, 11, 32, 52
Hariṇa, 182
Harvahaka, 108
Hastināpur, 11, 12, 135, 174
Hazaribagh Range, 112, 148, 149, 152
Hema Citra, 54
Hemakūṭ(a), 10, 52, 53, 65, 69, 70, 71, 102
Hema Sṛṅga, 70, 75

Henan, 97
Herodotus, 42, 109, 141
Hima, 10
Himādri-varṣa, 68
Himālayas(n), 7, 20, 22, 50, 51, 53, 109, 114, 115, 121, 134, 139, 143, 148, 150, 151, 170, 173, 176, 177, 195
Himavanta, 16, 20
Himavat, 32, 49, 50, 112
Himavān, 49, 53, 54, 127
Himavat Khaṇḍa, 6, 10
Hindūkush, 20, 50, 52, 53, 90, 91, 97, 109, 142
Hiraṇmaya Varṣa, 73
Hiraṇvata, 10
Hiraṇya, 192
Hiraṇyagarbha, 187
Hiraṇyaśṛṅga, 67, 68
Hiraṇyaka varṣa, 73
Hiraṇyavat-varṣa, 76, 84, 85
Hiraṇyavatī, 76, 84
Hissar range, 83, 90, 92, 96, 97, 138
Hlādinī, 67
Hooghly, See 'Bhagirathi Hooghly'.
Hoṣīka, 168
Hṛadikā, 119
Hrādinī (Hlādinī), 67, 68
Hudūd-at-Ālam, 95
Hueng-Tsang, 82, 87, 102, 137, 157
Hūṇa, 169
Hwangho, 99, 102, 103, 105
Hyderabad, 144, 172

ICHAMATI, 148
Ikṣu, 115
Ikṣudā, 124
Ikṣuk(1)ā, 124
Ikṣvākus, 21
Ilāvṛta(varṣa), 7, 10, 52, 58, 84, 99
India, 87, 109, 147, 153, 154, 177, 180, 181
Indo-gangetic Plain, 109, 177
Indra, 15, 104, 107, 128, 130, 187
Indra Dwīpa, 69, 126, 129
Indranīla, 79
Indraprastha, 135, 174, 177
Indra Śaila, 74, 75
Indravana, 106
Indravati, 157
Indus, 20, 50, 66, 69, 114, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 171, 172
Ionians, 126, 192
Irāvatī, 114
Irtysh, 85, 86, 87, 102
Ishkamish, 89, 91
Iskandar Dārya, 71
Iskandar Kul, 71
Ituna, 169

JAGUDA, 145, 165
Jalangi, 148
Jaladwīpa, 35
Jalarūpaśila, 35
Jambū (Dwīpa), 3, 7, 10, 13, 20, 22, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 49, 51, 52, 56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 73, 76, 82, 83, 87, 89, 97, 99, 127, 178, 179
Jambul, 82
Jambulā, 119
Janapadas, 7, 136, 138, 140, 142, 161, 162, 163, 170
Jāṅgala, 135, 145, 163, 165
Jangha, 97
Janu, 115
Jānuka, 167
Jarṇa, 165
Jarudhi, 75, 80, 82, 85
Jaṭhara, 57, 99, 100, 102
Java, 21, 34, 35, 127, 180, 182
Jaya, 70
Jayanta, 97
Jayanti, 153
Jhelum, 114, 143, 145, 170, 171
Jhelum-Chenab Doāb, 145
Jityam Tau, 92
Jonk, 113, 125
Jurudhi Mountain, 3
Jyotiratha, 118
Jyotiṣmat, 10
Jyotiṣmatī, 70
Jyotsnā, 70

Kabul, 109, 114, 132, 142, 143
Kācala, 97
Kacchapa, 56
Ka(ā)cchīka, 146, 166
Kacchīya, 166, 172
Kadalīvana, 74
Kafirnigan, 90, 92, 95, 96, 97
Kaicī, 97
Kaikeya, 146, 164, 170 173
Kailāsa, 3, 53, 57, 65, 66, 69, 71
Kaimur, 160
Kakudmāna, 41
Kāla, 93, 97, 191
Kalai Khumb, 90, 91
Kalapagrāma, 57
Kalat, 141, 172
Kālatoyad(k)a, 141, 163
Kālatoyas, 172
Kā(o)lavana, 148, 166, 171
Kalavya, 168
Kalchuries, 175
Kālīkata, 166
Kālīndī, 97
Kalinga(s), 20, 110, 130, 131, 151, 156, 157, 163, 164, 167, 173
Kālītaka, 166
Kālīsindh, 116, 178
Kālodaka, 35
Kalpa, 190, 193, 196
Kalpa Sūtras, 16
Kalvan, 148, 171
Kāmadeśa, 143
Kāmarūpa, 131
Kambala(ā), 97
Kamboja, 130, 143, 164
Kampila, 19, 135
Kāmyā (Kanyā), 10
Kamyaka, 134, 135
Kānanathalī, 74
Kanaka (mountains), 91, 93
Kaṅka, 89
Kaṇṭakāra, 164
Kapila, 74, 77, 89, 91, 93, 97, 167
Kapilā karṇika, 97
Kapilavāstu, 134
Kapiñjala, 74, 75, 79, 80
Karakoram, 50, 59
Karamnāśā, 118, 160
Kāraskara, 147, 166
Kara Tagh, 92, 93, 96
Karataghin, 92, 98
Kara Tau, 53, 73, 80, 81, 82
Karatchukor, 62
Karkotaka, 129
Karmamārga, 165
Karṇapravaraṇa, 169
Kārtikeya, 56, 57
Kartoyā, 118, 121
Karūsas, 131, 158, 159, 160, 167, 168
Karvata, 97
Kaseruka, 165
Kaserumat, 126, 127, 130
Kāṣghar 52, 61, 100, 101, 104, 160
Kashka Darya, 83, 84
Kashmir, 30, 143, 172
Kāśī, 20, 21, 22, 135, 136, 156, 163, 171, 172, 173, 175, 177
Kasika, 113, 125, 137
Kāśī Khanada, 6
Kāśmīras, 165, 166, 171, 172
Kaśyapa, 1, 103, 104
Kasyapa Dwīpa, 36
Kataha, 126, 127, 129
Kati, 62
Kauravia, 33
Kauśāmbī, 12, 134
Kauśāmbeya, 19
Kauśikī, 115
Kausitaki, 17, 187
Kāvata, 21
Kāverī, 113, 116, 122, 130, 154, 156, 172, 177
*Kāvyamīmaṁsa* of Rajaśekhara, 112, 126, 131, 140, 151
Kekaṣa, 164
Kekaya(s), 21, 22, 138, 164
Ken, 119, 157, 160
Kerala, 123, 153, 155, 167, 168, 172, 173, 176
Kesar Valley, 94, 95
Keśava, 87
Ketumāla (Dwīpa), 3, 10, 25, 52 58, 64, 65, 73, 83, 89, 97, 99, 142

Kharjūravana, 74
Khāndeś, 147, 148
Khan Tengri, 101
Khasa, 169, 173
Khotan, 102, 104, 107
Khuramāla Sea, 36
Khwaja Mohammad range, 52, 91
Khyāti, 9
Kīkaṭas, 20
Kikarava, 168
Kiṁpurusa (varsa), 7, 10, 52
Kinnarā-Deśa, 58
Kinnaras, 54, 56, 74, 75, 94, 96, 103, 106
Kirāta, 56, 58, 126, 127, 163, 165, 169
Kirghiz, 53, 73, 82, 86
Kīrtti, 9
Kiṣengaṅgā, 143
Kiṣkindhā, 22
Kiskindhaka, 158, 161, 168
Kiṣkindha Kāṇḍa, 21
Kizil Kum, 53, 81
Kizil Su, 62, 100, 101, 102, 103
Kokcha valley, 55, 90, 91
Kolkai, 175
Komgystso, 65
Kosala, 20, 21, 84, 134, 135, 136, 158, 159, 161, 168, 170, 173, 175
Kosambī, 175
Kosī, 62, 115, 149, 150, 174
Kosī-Gaṅgā Doāb, 149
Kraivya Pañcāla, 19
Kramah, 119
Kramāt, 119
Kramu, 119
Kratu, 9
Krauñca (Dwīpa), 8, 10, 17, 28, 29, 33, 39, 45, 46, 56, 97
Krauñca Śaila Vana, 58
Krpā, 113, 125
Krsna, 2, 5, 6, 34, 87, 92, 95, 97, 100, 113, 134, 154, 156, 157, 172, 176, 177, 182
Krṣṇābhauma, 108
Krsnanāgamani-Purjaka, 97
Krṣna Janma Khaṇḍlās, 6
Kṛṣṇa Gaṅgā, 63, 64
Kṛṣṇavenī, 122
Kṛṣṇavenva, 122
Kṛṣpāda, 97
Kṛtamālā, 123
Krumu, 114
Kṛvis, 19
Kṣamā, 9
Kṣatodara, 165
Kṣatris, 164
Kṣatriya, 126, 127
Kṣatroyotha, 165
Kṣīroda, 35
Kṣīra Sagara, 43, 44
Kṣīra Samudra, 40
Ksudra-Parvatas, 110
Kṣupaṇa, 169
Kubera, 7, 10, 57, 97
Kuhū, 114
Kukkuṭa, 166
Kukṣi, 10
Kukuras, 158
Kula, 97, 163
Kula Parvatas, 34, 110, 128
Kulinda, 164
Kulīya, 148
Kulu, 171, 172, 173
Kulūta(s), 165, 171, 172, 173
Kuluto, 165
Kulya, 163, 167
Kulyab, 94, 95
Kumāra, 126, 167, 172
Kumārī, 113, 125, 126
Kumārika (Khaṇḍa), 126, 127
Kumedh(a), 92
Kumuabha, 97
Kumud, 92, 93, 94, 95, 182
Kumuda, 56, 94, 96, 108
Kumudā Cala, 89
Kumudprabhā, 77, 86, 87
Kumudvatī, 121
Kumuñja, 100, 101, 103, 104, 106
Kunar, 62, 143
Kunduz, 90, 91
Kunlun, 50, 53, 59, 99, 101
Kuntala(s), 136, 153, 154, 157, 163, 168, 171

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

Kunti, 163
Kuṇapa, 169
Kūpā, 113, 125
Kupatha, 154, 167, 169
Kurava, 169
Kuriali, 62
Kūrma (Purāṇa), 7, 28, 42, 112, 129, 130
Kūrmacakra, 130
Kūrmanivasa, 5
Kūrmavibhāga, 5
Kursatviṣadha Mountain, 66
Kuru(s), 10, 11, 12, 20, 70, 76, 82, 87, 131, 133, 135, 165, 170, 172, 174
Kuru Jāṅgala, 134
Kurukṣetra, 5, 7, 137
Kuruk Tagh, 99, 100, 102
Kuru Varṣa, 76
Kuśa Dwīpa, 8, 10, 33, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 46, 130, 179, 182, 183
Kuśamāla, 36
Kuśāmba, 19
Kuśaprāvaraṇa, 169
Kusaṭṭa, 163
Kuśavatī, 97, 175
Kuśinagar, 150
Kuśīṇārā, 134, 175
Kusuma, 167
Kūṭaśālmali, 35

LADAKH, 51, 53, 66, 171
Lajjā, 9
Lakṣanas, 1
Lakṣmī, 9, 129
Lalita Vistāra, 32
Lampāka(s), 140, 143, 165, 172
Lamshān, 172
Lamulni, 124
Lāṅgūlinī, 124
Laṅkā, 21, 22, 181
Lavana, 28
Licchavis, 175
Liṅga (Purāṇa), 6, 18, 42, 48
Lions, 62
Lohita, 66, 71, 113, 115
Lohityā, 115
Lokas, 54, 94, 95, 106
Lucknow, 115, 134
Lumbini Vana, 134
Luni, 138
Lūpā, 117

MADHAVI, 70
Madhauraiya, 97
Madhoman, 89
Madhumān mountain, 71
Madhumana, 93
Madhuwatsarovara, 70, 71
Madhyadeśa, 116, 126, 127, 131, 132, 133, 137, 138, 160, 163, 173
Madhya Pradesh, 119, 161
Magadha, 130, 136, 150, 163, 167, 172, 173
Magadhas, 20, 21, 131, 151, 171, 172, 175
Mahābhadrā, 62, 73, 74, 75, 78, 79, 84
Mahābhārata, 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 45, 48, 130, 131, 133, 137, 140, 142, 144, 151, 156, 157, 158
Mahābhauma, 108
Mahābhṛja, 89
Mahadeo Hills, 112, 146, 152, 154, 181
Mahāgaurī, 121
Mahājanapradas, 135
Mahākalapa, 193
Mahakaśa, 108
Mahākul-Parvata, 178
Mahāloka, 193
Mahāmalaya, 180
Mahāmāli, 56
Mahāmegha, 74
Mahānadī, 56, 113, 118, 120, 125, 130, 152, 156, 157, 160, 176
Mahānāgas, 97, 103
Mahānasna, 97
Mahā Netra, 107
Mahānīla, 75, 79, 100, 103, 104, 106
Mahāpadma, 56, 94
Mahā Purāṇas, 1

Mahārāṣṭra(s), 148, 154, 167, 172, 173
Mahar-Loka, 38
Mahāsāgara, 178
Mahāśaila, 74
Mahāśaka, 167
Mahāsthala, 108
Māhātmyas, 5, 6, 8
Mahāvana, 79, 134
Mahāvegā, 119
Mahavitam Khaṇḍa, 42
Mahendra (Mountain), 22, 108, 112, 113, 125, 126, 129, 154, 155
Mahī, 117, 171
Mahiacala Kutaka, 97
Mahisa, 97
Māhiṣaka(s), 153, 154, 167, 172
Mahisi, 97
Māhiṣmatī, 175
Māhiyas, 171
Maidantal, 82
Maikal, 112, 113, 146, 152, 154, 161
Maināka, 17
Majumdar, 126, 128
Makara, 56
Makran, 109, 138, 140, 141, 183
Maksu, 71
Makṣuṇā, 119
Māla, 167
Mālada, 151, 167
Malaka, 163
Mālava(s), 131, 158, 160, 167, 168, 169, 173
Malavarṇka, 167
Malaya, 22, 113, 123, 127, 129, 169, 179, 180, 181, 182
Malaya Dwīpa, 179, 180, 181
Malda(s), 172
Malechas, 179, 181
Malla, 141, 150
Mallakodara, 165
Mallas, 134, 176
Mālvaṇika, 167
Mālyavān, 52, 58, 100, 101
Mānanda, 167
Manasā, 62
Mānasarovar, 57, 65, 66, 71, 102
Manavartika, 167
Maṇḍ, 113, 125
Mandagā, 113, 125
Mandākini, 56, 61, 65, 118
Mandara, 41, 180
Mandavāhinī, 113, 125
Mandla, 112, 161, 169
Manibhadra, 65
Maniśaila, 100, 101, 103, 104
Maṇivara, 56
Mañjra, 154, 155
Mañjulā, 119
Manoramā, 117
Manu, 1, 109
Mānusi, 97
Manusmṛti, 17
Mārīca's Āśrama, 22
Mārīchi, 9
Markaṇḍeya (Purāṇa), 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 28, 48, 57, 64, 109, 126, 130, 131, 132, 147, 152, 157, 159
Markuṣ, 71
Marudridhā, 114
Maruts, 18, 25
Maryāda Mountain, 75, 82, 107, 110
Māṭha, 164, 170
Māthaṅga, 167
Mathurā, 6, 13, 158, 164, 174
Matnakasika, 97
Matsya (Purāṇa), 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 20, 21, 28, 40, 42, 43, 45, 48, 49, 64, 65, 66, 84, 112, 113, 116, 118, 129, 131, 137, 138, 146, 147, 151, 152, 157, 159, 161, 163, 173, 175
Maulika(s), 154, 155, 168, 172, 175
Mauṣiya, 97
Mayūra, 75, 78, 80
Medhā, 9, 10
Medhātithi, 10
Meghadūta, 57, 120
Megha Śaila, 74, 81
Meghnā, 148, 149, 152
Mekala(s), 158, 161, 168, 173

Meru, 3, 10, 17, 22, 31, 32, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 69, 70, 73, 75, 78, 82, 89, 91, 93, 96, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105
Merukūṭa, 75
Middle Gangetic Valley, 149, 150 (*See also* Gangetic plain (Basin)
Mithilā, 21, 150
Mitrāyu, 1
Modaka, 97
Monghyr, 119, 136, 150, 152
Mṛgakāntā, 70, 71
Mṛgyā, 70, 71
Mritya Loka, 103
Mūka, 163
Mukuṭ(a), 89, 92, 93, 96
Muṇḍa, 167
Muni, 1, 9, 96
Muñjavān, 16, 17
Mū(Uñ)javatas, 19
Musi, 157, 172
Mūṣika, 156, 157, 167, 172
Murala(s), 147, 171
Murghab, 90, 92, 97
Mūtibas, 20
Mutipas, 156
Mysore, 153, 154

NABHI, 10
Nāgadeśa, 179
Nāga dwīpa, 36, 96, 126, 127
Nāgapati, 75, 83
Nāga(s), 54, 74, 75, 96, 129, 130, 181, 182
Nāga Śaila, 74, 75, 79, 80
Nāgavana, 74
Naimika, 168
Naimisaranya, 4
Nairata, 130
Nairṇika, 168
Naiṣadha, 169
Naiṣika, 168
Naitika, 168
Nala Kālika, 157, 168
Nalakāraka, 168
Nalamāla, 36
Nalinī, 67
Nāmāvāsaka, 167
Nanda, 56
Nandaka, 56
Nandanī, 116
Nandini, 97
Naṅgā Parbāt, 66, 67
Nanshan, 99, 100, 107
Nānwalī, 70
Narada, 1
Narakas, 4
Nārāyaṇa, 34, 87, 94
Narmadā, 112, 113, 116, 118, 130, 146, 147, 152, 157, 160, 161, 162, 171, 172, 175
Narwar, 120, 158, 160, 172
Naryn, 78, 79, 80
Nasik, 133, 147, 159, 172
Nāsikānta, 166
Nāsikyādya, 166
Nāsikya(s), 133, 147, 148, 172
Nāsikyava, 166
Navrāṣṭra, 167
Newaj, 120
Nicaksu, 12
Nicitā, 115
Nigarhara, 169
Nīhāra, 169
Nīla (Mountain), 10, 52, 53, 56, 69, 70, 73, 74, 83, 85, 87, 89, 99, 100
Nīla Mauleya, 108
Nīlambara Deva, 94
Nīlotpalā, 119
Nirāhāra, 169
Nirmal range, 154, 155
Nirvindhyā, 112, 120
Nirvīrā, 115
Niṣadanadī, 120
Niṣadha (Mountain), 3, 10, 32, 52, 53, 57, 59, 69, 70, 71, 84, 89, 99, 100, 101, 102, 105, 120, 158, 160, 172, 173
Nisadhāvatī, 120
Niścala, 115
Niścīrā, 115
Nisvīrā, 115

Nivita, 115
Nūpī, 117
Nura Tau,

ORISSA, 125, 154, 157, 160, 173
Oudh, 21, 133, 159, 160
Oxus, 30, 55, 61, 65, 71, 73, 89, 90, 91, 92, 96, 97, 98, 142

PADMA, 56, 193
Padmā, 21, 148, 149, 151, 152, 171
Padma (Purāṇa), 2, 4, 7, 9, 13, 40, 131
Pahlava, 141
Paiṣṇī, 113, 118
Paithan, 155, 175
Pakistan, 144, 151
Pakthas, 19
Palaśā, 97
Palaśinī, 113, 125
Pāli literature, 110, 162
Pallava, 163
Pāmīrs, 31, 50, 51, 52, 59, 68, 71, 78, 83, 89, 91
Pañcāla(s), 19, 20, 61, 130, 131, 135, 159, 163, 170, 173
Pāṇḍavas, 23
Pāṇḍura, 93, 96
Pāṇḍya, 21, 109, 154, 155, 156, 167, 173, 175
Pāṇika, 168
Panini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, 137
Pāṇis, 15, 20
Panj, 61, 90, 91, 92, 95
Panjāb, *see* Paunjab
Panjanād, 139, 149
Pañjkora, 143
Pankini, 119
Pārā, 117
Parachak, 108
Pārada, 144, 164
Parardha, 193
Paraśakasthalī, 74
Parasara, 5, 9, 11, 130
Parasikas, 131
Paraswani, 113, 125
Pārāvatas, 20
Patavi, 161, 162, 169
Parbati, 117
Paricakrā, 19
Pārijāta Mountains, 3, 93
Pāripātra, 17, 112, 116, 120
Parita, 164
Pāriyātra, 22
Parivaya, 108
Parnasa, 159
Parusni, 114
Pāriyāta mountain, 89
Pascima Dwīpa, 34
Pāśinī, 125
Pataccara, 163
Patachchāras, 171
Pāṭaliputra, 175
Patna, 9, 11, 134, 148
Patvi, 159
Pauṇḍra, 167
Paurika, 168
Paurāṇika Saṁhitā, 1
Paurika, 154, 155, 168
Pavanī, 67, 68, 116
Pawa, 150
Payoṣṇī, 112
Payodā, 70, 71
Payoli, 120
Pen-Gaṅgā, 63, 155.
Penner, 122, 154, 156
Periyar, 123
Persian(s), 176, 185, 192
Pidica, 165
Pīḍika, 145, 165
Piṅgala, 112
Piñjara, 89
Pippala, 118
Pippaliśroṇī, 118
Piśābcikā, 118
Pitrisomā, 112
Pitṛsoma, 124
Pittala, 98
Pivari, 97
Plakṣa, 10, 33, 34, 39, 41, 42
Plato, 192, 193
Pluṣta, 169

Potana, 175
Prabhanjana, 97
Prācya, 131, 148
Prācya Deśa, 173
Prāgjyotiṣa(s), 151, 167, 171, 172,
Prajāvrats, 27
Prakriti Khaṇḍa, 6
Prakriyā, 3
Prānhitā, 155, 156
Prasthala, 165
Prathama, 163
Prativaiśya, 164
Pratyantya mountains, 89
Pravaṅga, 167
Pravijaya, 167
Priyalaukika, 164
Priyavrata, 4, 9, 10
Pṛṣadhra, 167
Ptolemy, 92, 109, 138, 140, 143, 144, 148, 151, 153, 156
Pudukkottai, 155, 156
Pulaha, 9
Pulastya, 9
Pule(ī)ya, 166
Pulinda(s), 20, 130, 156, 157, 164, 166, 168
Puliṅga, 163
Pañcajanāh, 19
Puṇḍarīkā, 70, 71, 129
Puṇḍra, 167, 171
Puṇḍras, 20, 131, 151, 156
Puṇḍravardhana, 151
P(a)unjāb, 138, 139, 144, 145
Punpalvatī, 123
Punyā, 97
Puṇyodā, 97
Purabi, 141
Purali, 141
Purandhra, 163
Purna, 121, 147, 155
Purus, 19
Puṣkalā, 97
Puṣkalavatī, 176
Puṣkara, 2, 8, 10, 33, 34, 35, 39, 42, 43, 44, 75, 80
Puṣpagiri, 123
Puṣpajā(ti), 123
Puṣpaka, 55, 74, 81, 96
Puṣpavatī, 123
Puṣṭi, 9
Putra, 10
Pyandzh, 54, 89, 90, 91, 92
Pyoṣṇī, 120

RAGHUVAMSA, 151, 181
Raichur, 154
(Rājaśekhara's) *Kāvyamīmāṁsa*, *see Kāvyamīmaṁsa*
Rajasthan, 136, 138
Rajgarha (Rajgir), 146, 150
Rājiva Kokila, 97
Rajmahal Hills, 149, 150, 152
Rākṣasas, 82, 180
Rākṣasa Tal, 65, 71, 75
Raktanjalam Lohitaṁ, 35
Rāma, 5, 21, 22, 120, 134
Rāmagaṅgā, 62, 63, 115, 175
Ramaṇa, 164, 167
Ramaṇaka (Varṣa), 73, 76, 83, 84, 85
Rāmāyaṇa, 1, 3, 5, 21, 24, 27, 31, 32, 35, 36, 40, 46, 134, 159, 190
Ramina, 166
Ramya, 10
Ramyaka, 82, 83
Raṅgeya, 167
Raṅkṣu, 115
Rapti, 115, 149, 150, 170, 171, 175
Rasht, 92, 98
Rasiti(a), 166
Ratnadhāra, 165
Ratnavahini, 119
Rāvaṇa, 22, 181
Ravī, 114, 115, 145, 180
Ravi-Chenab Doāb, 146
Renumana, 100
Revā Khaṇḍa, 6, 162
Ṛgveda, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 185, 186, 187
Riksa-Parvat 112
Riksavat, 113
Ṛksa, 120
Rohi, 117
Rohini, 134
Romahārṣanika, 1
Romesh, 107
Rośā, 97
Roshan, 55, 96
Ṛṣabha, 4, 97, 100, 120

Ṛṣika (Ṛsikulya), 112, 113, 124, 125.
Ṛṣis, 4, 7, 53, 54, 94
Ṛtukulyā, 124
Ṛtumālā, 123
Ruba-al-Mamur, 37
Rudra, 18, 93, 187
Rūpā, 117
Rupabas, 117
Rūpak(p)a, 166
Rūpasa, 147, 166
Rūpya, 32
Rybachya, 82

SABALA, 10
Śabara(s), 20, 168
Sābarmatī, 116, 146
Sabhāparva, 21, 23, 24
Sabharadwāja, 165
Sabi, 116, 137, 175
Sadānīrā, 17, 116
Sadaseraka, 165
Sadātīrā, 116
Saha, 163
Sahasaubhaka, 165
Sahasrapuri, 96
Sahasra Śekhara mountain, 78, 92, 93, 94, 96
Sahotkaca, 97
Sahūdaka, 169
Sahva, 22, 113, 122, 127, 146, 147, 154, 155
Śailaṣa, 167
Śailendra Jarudhi, 82
Saindhavas, 131
Sainika Janapada, 145, 165
Śaiva, 181
Śaivala, 108
Śaka, 28, 29, 33, 39, 92
Śakādriha, 164
Śakadwīpa, 5, 8, 10, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40
Śakahrahda, 164
Śākala, 174
Sakāma, 108
Sakāvati, 97
Sakela, 146
Sāketa, 134, 135, 175
Sakheṭaka, 163
Śakmund, 108
Sakṛtraka, 169
Śakulī, 119
Śalmal(a)i (Dwīpa), 8, 10, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 39, 45, 107
Salt Range, 144, 145
Śālva(s), 131, 138, 163, 167, 173
Samāheya, 166
Samahiya janapada, 146
Samarkand, 83, 93
Sāmaveda, 16, 187
Sambara, 15
Sambhūti, 9
Saṁhitās, 6, 17, 18
Samudgaka, 169
Samudrāntaka, 97
Saṅkhacūda, 129
Samvakra, 108
Samyukta Tṛśṛṅga, 75, 80, 82
Śañcasūra, 182
Sandur, 113, 125
Sañjaya, 23, 33
Śaṅkara, 64, 67, 68, 89, 181
Śaṅkarācārya, 181
Śaṅkarācārya's Āśrama, 96
Śaṅkha, 56, 108, 181, 182, 183
Śaṅka Dwīpa, 45, 179, 181, 182, 183
Saṅkhagiri, 181
Śaṅkhakūṭa, 74, 75, 79, 80
Śaṅkhamukh, 181
Śaṅkhanāg, 181
Sannati, 9
Sansapāyana, 1
Śāntā, 70
Santi, 9, 70
Sanumana, 74
Sapa Sanga, 108
Śara, 56
Śāradā, 62, 115
Śaradaṇḍa, 138
Saraja, 168
Śaravaṇa, 56, 58
Śarāvastī, 176, 177
Sāraswatas, 171
Saraswatī, 16, 70, 114, 115, 116, 144, 146, 159, 171
Sarayu, 16, 66, 115
Sarvoṣadha, 66

Sarju, 135
Sarikol, 59, 62
Sarsat, 115
Sarvaga, 169
Saryatas, 158
Satabala, 121
Satadrava, 164
Śatadru, 114
Satamālā, 123
Śata Patha Brāhmaṇa, 17, 19
Śatapatheśvara, 163
Śatarudra, 115
Sātavāhana, 153
Satī, 9
Satīrā, 116
Satiyaputra, 153
Satmala range, 154, 155
Satnap, 108
Satpuras, 110, 112, 132, 161, 162
Śatrughna, 22
Sat Śṛṅga, 74, 75, 78, 80
Ṣaṭsura, 169
Śatudri Sātvanas, 20. 114
Satvats, 158
Satya-Loka, 38
Śaulika, 168
Saumanasa, 35
Saumya, 126, 127, 129, 130
Saundikera, 161
Saurāṣṭra(s), 20, 21, 131, 146, 166, 172 173
Sauvīra, 21, 108, 130, 164
Sauvīras, 131, 144
Śavara(s), 156, 167, 168
Sāvarṇi, 1, 48
Savindhu, 100
Sayan, 85, 87
Seonath, 113, 125
Śeṣa, 129
Setavya, 134
Setuka, 167
Shaksgan, 50
Shirabad, 90, 96
Shuman, 95, 96
Shyok, 69, 71
Siddhānta Śiromaṇi, 40, 126
Siddhas, 75, 76, 77, 85, 106
Siddhāśrama, 21
Siddhi, 9
Sighra, 120
Śīghrodā, 120
Śigrus, 20
Śikharin, 32
Śikhī, 89, 91, 94
Śikhī-Śaila, 93, 94, 97
Śiloda, 67
Simhala, 126, 129
Simsapavana, 134
Simyus, 20
Sind(h), 30, 115, 120, 144, 145 158, 172
Sindhu, 16, 21, 67, 68, 113, 114, 115, 116, 130, 144, 164, 173
Sind-Sāgar, Doāb, 145
Sinīvālī, 121
Śiprā, 117, 120, 158, 175
Sirāla, 147, 166
Sircar, D.C., 174
Sirohi, 146, 172
Śiśira, 35
Sītā, 21, 22, 35, 62, 65, 66, 67, 68 100, 101, 102, 105
Śītānta, 100, 101, 103, 104, 106
Siterajā, 119
Śitibāhu, 121
Sītodā, 62, 89, 93
Śīto-Dampatikā, 97
Śiva, 2, 6, 11, 67, 140
Sivi, 142
Śivis, 19
Skanda (Purāṇa), 4, 6, 8, 12, 40, 42, 126
Smṛti, 9, 131
Sogdiana, 83, 84
Śokala, 168
Salavana, 134
Soma, 68, 187
Somasita, 54
Somaulā, 97
Sombhadra, 78

Son(e), 112, 132, 133, 136, 148, 149
X Soṇa, 35, 118 A
Sonar, 112, 119, 157
Sone, *see* Son
Śonkasa, 97
Sopara, 148, 175
Śraddhā, 9
Śravaṇa, 97
Sravastī, 135, 175
Sri Sar, 103
Srivam, 103
Srivijaya, 180
Śṛṅgavān, 10, 52, 53, 76, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86
Sṛñjayas, 158
Sṛṣṭi Khaṇḍ, 2, 13
Stavaka, 97
Suayamjatavata, 134
Subhauma, 108
Sudāmi, 113
Sudāsa, 15, 19, 20
Śuddha, 108
Sudarśana, 33, 35
Sudhīra, 100
Śūdra(s), 126, 127, 140, 144, 163, 164
Śūdrakula, 164
Sugrīva, 21, 56
Suhma(s), 151, 152, 173
Suhnottra, 167
Sujaraka, 166
Sukanadi, 97
Sukti hills, 126, 127
Sūktimat (Sukhtimat), 112, 113, 124
Śuktimatī, 119
Śukrācārya's Āśrama, 94
Sukumārī, 113, 125
Śūlakāra, 165
Sūlika, 165
Sumāheya, 166
Sumati, 1
Sumātrā, 34, 109, 127, 180, 182
Sumaula, 97
Sumedhā, 97, 100, 104
Sumudramālā, 97
Sumungala, 108
Sumuñja, 101
Sumurdhaja, 108
Sun, 2, 5, 11, 192, 194
Sunag mountain, 79
Sunāga, 75
Sunandana, 108
Sunarmada, 166
Sunassa, 107
Sunetra, 56
Sūnī, 113, 125
Śunīlajjā, 119
Supakṣa mountain, 89, 91
Suparaka, 176
Supārśva, 75, 78, 79, 80, 165
Suprayogā, 122
Surā, 35, 117
Surāla, 147, 148, 166
Suras, 93, 131
Śūrasena(s), 61, 137, 163, 174
Surāṣṭra, 166
Surecaka, 97
Surkhan, 90, 95, 96, 97
Surkhan Durya, 92
Sūrya, 117, 148, 187
Sūrparaka (Sūryāraka), 147, 159, 166
Sūryakānta mountain, 76, 86
Sūryavana, 75, 79
Suṣṇa, 15
Susomā, 114
Sūta Romaharṣaṇa, 1, 7, 9, 75
Śūfasenas, 173
Sutlej, 7, 114, 115, 132, 138, 139, 144, 170
Sūtra(s), 17, 18
Suvakṣa, 93, 94
Suvaprā, 97
Suvarṇā, 97
Suvaraṇakaṭaka, 97
Suvarṇamukhī, 124
Svāpada, 147, 166
Śveta, 83, 84, 85, 93, 97, 114
Swadhā, 9
Swaduda, 29
Swāhā, 9
Swāmī Praṇavānanda, 66

Swantargiri, 166
Swargaṅgā, 61
Swat, 97, 143, 174
Sweta, 10, 52, 53, 73, 69, 70, 75, 76, 79
Syāmā, 97
Syamantaka gem, 11
Syr Daria, 78, 79, 102

Taittirika, 166
Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, 45
Tajikistan, 71, 72, 92, 95, 96
Talagāna, 142, 165, 169
Talanāga, 165
Tālkūna, 165
Tallītaka, 166
Tamaasā, 118, 165, 166, 169
Tāmasa, 147
Tāmasas, 173
Tāmasī, 97
Tamba Kośī, 115
Tambara, 169
Tāmrilipta, 151
Tāmralipti(s), 172, 175, 177
Tāmraliptika(s), 151, 167, 172
Tāmraparni, 129
Tāmraparṇa(ī), 21, 123, 126, 127, 129
Tāmravarṇa Khaṇḍa, 129, 130
Tanap(k)a, 165
Taṅga, 97
Taṅgaṇa, 165
Tapā Loka, 38
Tāpasa, 147
Tāpī (Tāptī), 112, 113, 117, 120, 121, 132, 146, 147, 148, 152, 154, 157, 161, 175
Tapovana, 8
Tarim, 55, 65, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106
Tarūpaṇa, 166
Tashkurgan, 62
Tatsukha, 97
Tharpura, 169
Thokchan, 65
Tien Shan, 50, 52, 73, 79, 83, 87, 99, 101, 104, 106
Tīrthas, 2, 23
Tiruvanjikkala, 176
Tistā, 150, 151
Tons, 118, 157, 160
Tosala, 158, 168
Tośalas, 173
Tosalī, 173
Toyā, 121
Trans-Alai, 50, 52
Tridivā, 119
Trigarta(s), 138, 169
Trikakubha, 17
Trikūṭ, 180
Trilokya Darpaṇa, 13
Tripathagā, 67, 68, 69
Tripura, 158, 161, 168
Tripuras, 123, 172, 175
Trisāma, 112, 114
Tritiya, 17, 115
Tritsus, 19
Tṛśṅga, 75, 80, 82, 93
Tsingling Mountain, 53, 99, 100, 108
Tucharistan, 98
Tukhāra, 164
Tumbara, 169
Tumbura, 158, 160, 169
Tumana, 165
Tumura, 158
Tumuva, 169
Tuṇḍikera(s), 158, 161, 162, 169, 172
Tuṅgabhadrā, 122, 154
Turaga, 169
Turfan, 106, 107
Turkistan, 73, 87, 93
Turks, 31, 80, 92
Turvasas, 19
Tusāra, 164
Tuṣṭi, 9
Tuṣṭikāra, 169

Uccarita, 85
Ucchida, 168
Udaipur, 136, 159
Udayagiri, 35
Udbhida, 168

Uddalaka, 57
Udicya, 131, 133 A
Udiya Deśa, 173
Udumbara, 18, 137
Udyogaparva, 24
Ujjain(i), 6, 117, 120, 158, 162, 175
Ulanghī, 53, 55
Ula Tau, 80, 86
Ulida, 168
Uluka, 107
Umā, 65
Umavān, 56
Umā-Vana, 58
Upaniṣads, 16, 186
Upaniveśa, 164
Upaniveśya, 164
Upasaṁhāra, 3
Upodbhāta, 3
Upodghāta, 3
Upper Gangetic Basin, 133, 134. *See also* Gangetic Plain
Uragas, 74
Urah-Sankirṇa, 108
Ural, 85
Urals, 87
Ūrjjā, 9
Urusa, 143
Uśīnara, 20
Utkala(s), 158, 160, 168, 173
Utkala Khaṇḍa, 6
Utpala, 24
Utpalāvatī, 123
Uttama, 17
Uttamārṇa, 158, 168
Uttara, 108
Uttarāpāda, 9
Uttara-pāñcāla, 134, 174
✓ Uttara Kuru, 42, 43, 44, 64, 65, 72, 73, 75, 77, 78, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 99
✓ Uttara Kuru(s), 20, 22
Uttara Mānasa, 70, 71

VACONGA, 97
Vadavamukha, 35
Vaḍavānala, 35
Vāḍhadhāna, 142
Vaha, 97
Vahela, 179
Vāhlika, 142, 163, 173
Vahni (Deva), 9, 54
Vaibhṛja, 89
Vaidik(ś)a, 168
Vaidūrya, 89, 91, 93
Vaidyut mountain, 66
Vaigai, 123, 155, 175
Vaijayā, 70, 72
Vaijayanti, 153
Vaikāñga mountain, 100, 101, 103, 104
Vairat, 116
Vairāta, 137
Vaiśa(i)kya, 168
Vaiśāli, 134, 150, 175
Vaiṣṇava(s), 4, 6
Vaiśyah, 126
Vaiśyas, 126, 127, 164
Vaitaraṇī, 121
Vaitravati, 121
Vaivasta, 96
Vājivāśika, 167
Vajikāśika, 167
Vajji Kingdom, 134
Vajraka mountain, 106
Vāka, 166
Vakhsh, 90, 96, 97
Vakhsh-ab, 90, 92
Vakṣu, 92
Valabhamukha, 36
Valari, 137
Vālhika, 142
Vali, 21
Vallabhi, 176
✓ Vālmīki, 21, 22
Vāmana (Purāṇa), 5, 7, 8, 13, 28, 42, 113, 125, 126, 127, 129
Vaṁśa, 175
Vaṁśadharā, 124, 156
Vaṁśadhāriṇī, 112
Vaṁśakarā, 124
Vanadāraka, 168
Vanapataka, 97
Vanaparva, 23

Vanavāsaka, 153, 167
A Vaṅga, 97, 151, 152, 156, 171
Vaṅgaka, 97
Vaṅgas, 20, 21
Vaṅgeya, 167
Vañjulā, 119, 122
Vapu, 9
Vara, 168
Varāha (Purāṇa), 12, 13, 40, 42, 75, 80, 183
Varāha Dwīpa, 179, 183
Varāhi, 183
Varāhamihira, 24, 130, 131
Vārāṇasī, 6, 134, 135, 171
Vārānāvatī, 17
Vardhamāna, 97
Varṇāsā, 116
Varṣas, 4, 7, 13, 38
Varṣaparvata (Nīla), 75, 110
Vārṣāyani, 48
Varuṇa, 127, 129, 130
Varvara(s), 164, 172
Vasiṣṭha, 9, 21, 22, 57
Vasiṣṭha Dharma Sūtrạ, 17
Vashas, 20
Vāsuki, 129
Vāṭadhāna, 142, 163
Vatranāh, 108
Vatsa, 163
Vatsaka, 108
Vātsīya, 166
Vayava, 130
Vāyu (Purāṇa), 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 18, 25, 48, 49, 65, 69, 74, 84, 96, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 106, 107, 127, 128, 131, 132, 138, 147, 152, 157, 159, 162, 178, 189
Vṛka, 163
Vedaratā, 116
Vedāsinī, 116
Vedasmṛti, 116
Vedavatī, 116, 122
Vedipala, 121
Vegavatī, 124
Veṇā, 120, 164
Veṇumān(a), 104, 106
Veṇumati, 117
Veṇvā, 120, 122
Vetravatī, 116, 117, 159
Vidarbha(s), 20, 154, 155, 157, 159, 168, 172, 173, 175
Vidheha, 20, 167
Vidhiyas, 171
Vidīśā, 61, 117, 158, 159, 173, 175
Vidiśas, 172, 175
Vidyutvan, 178, 179
Viha, 97
Vijayanandī, 24
Vijaysthala, 108
Vijji-Videha, 173
Vikirna, 97
Vimalā, 119
A Vindhya, 121, 130, 168
A Vindhyan(s), 20, 22, 109, 112, 113, 120, 131, 133, 136, 137, 138, 152, 153, 157, 158 160, 161, 162, 170, 173
Vindu (Sarovara), 67, 68, 69
Vinna, 120
Vipāśā, 114, 115, 119
Vipula, 55
Virahotra, 169
Virandāvana, 6
Viraṣpati, 94
Virāṭa, 175
Visala, 97, 115, 119
Viṣāṇis, 19
Viṣkambha parvatas, 110
Viṣṇugaṅgā, 63, 64
Viṣṇu Pada, 71
Viṣṇu (Purāṇa), 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 24, 28, 39, 42, 48, 49, 71, 87, 95, 112, 113, 123, 137, 138, 159, 183, 186, 191, 193, 194
Viśvamālā, 121
Viśvāmitra, 21, 57, 156
Viśwakarmā, 186, 187
Vītihotra, 158, 162, 169
Vrajaka, 108
Vṛṣabha mountain, 101
Vṛṣṇis, 158
Vṛtra, 15
Vyāsa, 1, 9

WAINGANGA, 63, 64, 120, 154
Wakhan, 55, 71
Wakhan finger, 90
Waziristan, 139, 141
Western Ghats, 148, 153
Wilson, 159, 186

YADUS, 19
Yajurveda, 16, 17, 187
Yakṣas, 20, 53, 57, 65, 75, 82, 94, 96, 103, 106
Yakṣendra Deva, 55
Yakṣu, 90, 97
Yama, 32, 180
Yama Dwīpa, 179
Yamaka, 167
Yamunā, 7, 114, 115, 117, 119, 132, 135, 136, 149, 151, 152, 157, 158, 159, 160, 171, 174
Yamunā-Meghnā Doāb, 149, 151
Yaqubi, 92, 180
Yārkand, 61, 69, 101, 103, 104
Yava Dwīpa, 164
Yavanas, 126, 127
Yazgulam, 90
Yenesei, 85, 87
Yomaka, 108
Yudhiṣṭhira, 6, 23, 24
Yugandhara, 138

ZAILAI RANGE, 73, 82
Zarafshan range, 73, 83, 84, 90, 96, 97
Zhob, 142

राज्य संग्रहालय पुस्तकालय लखनऊ

राज्य संग्रहालय पुस्तकालय, लखनऊ
क्रम संख्या ——
प्राप्ति तिथि ——
State Museum, Library, Lko.